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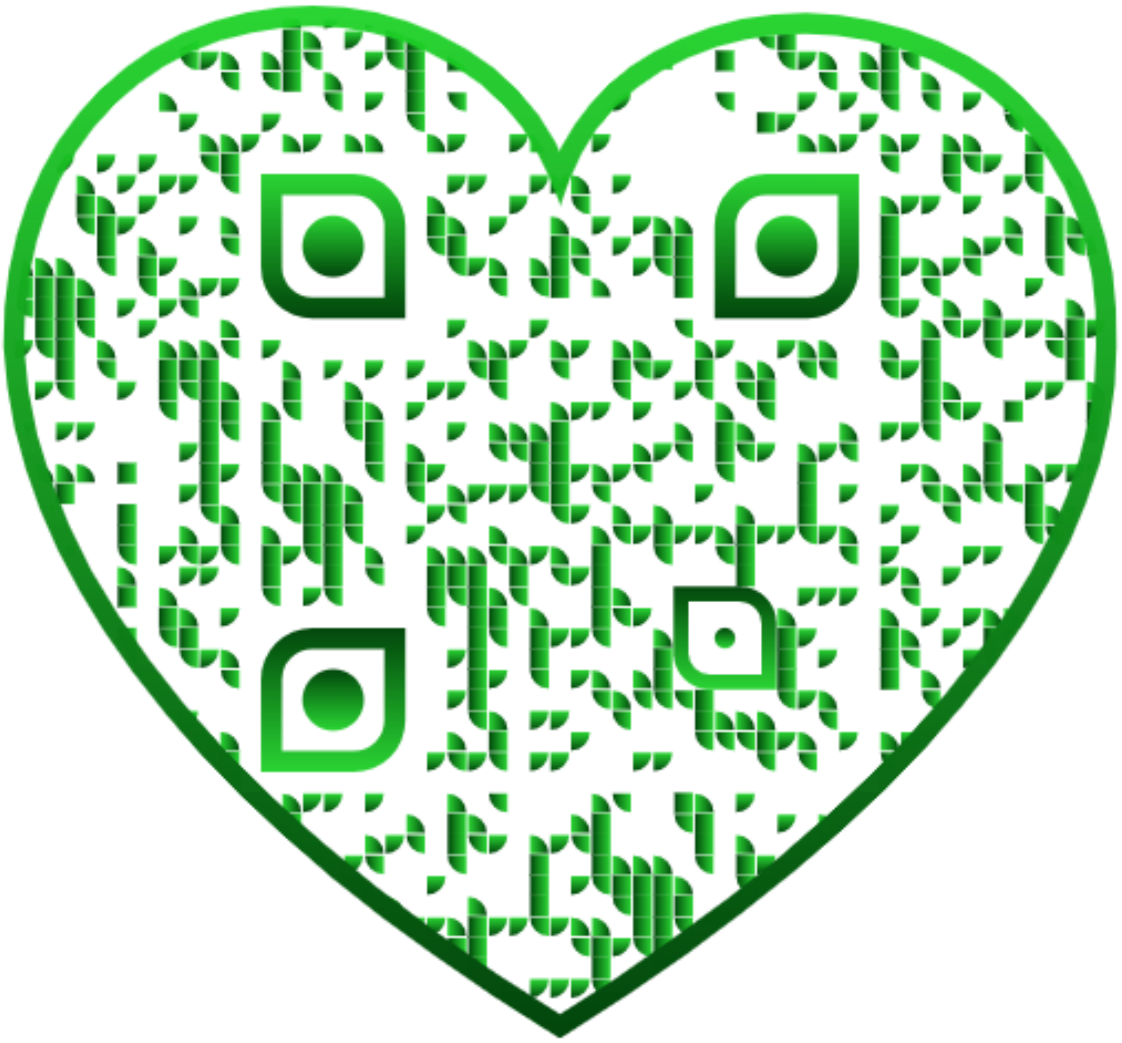

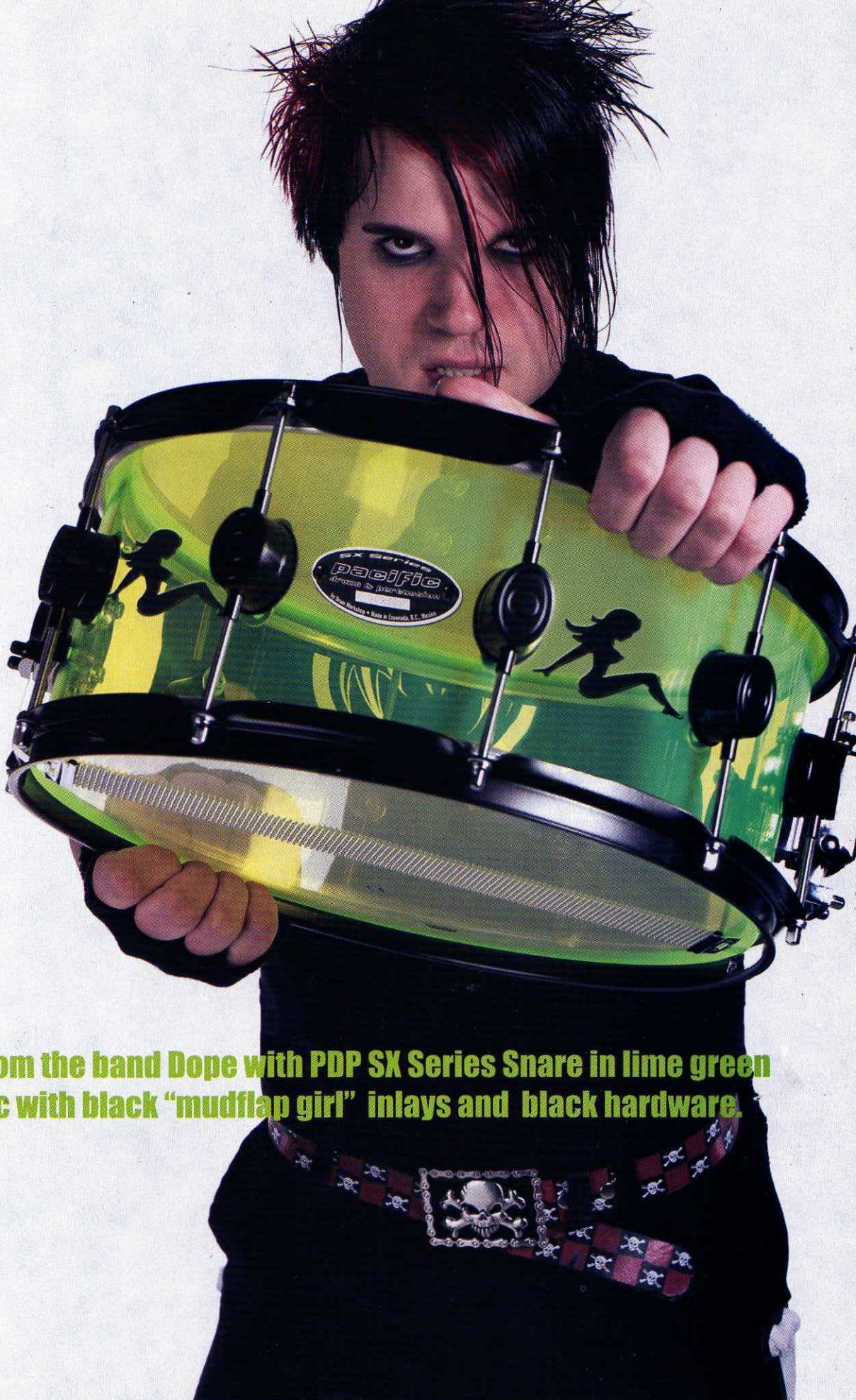

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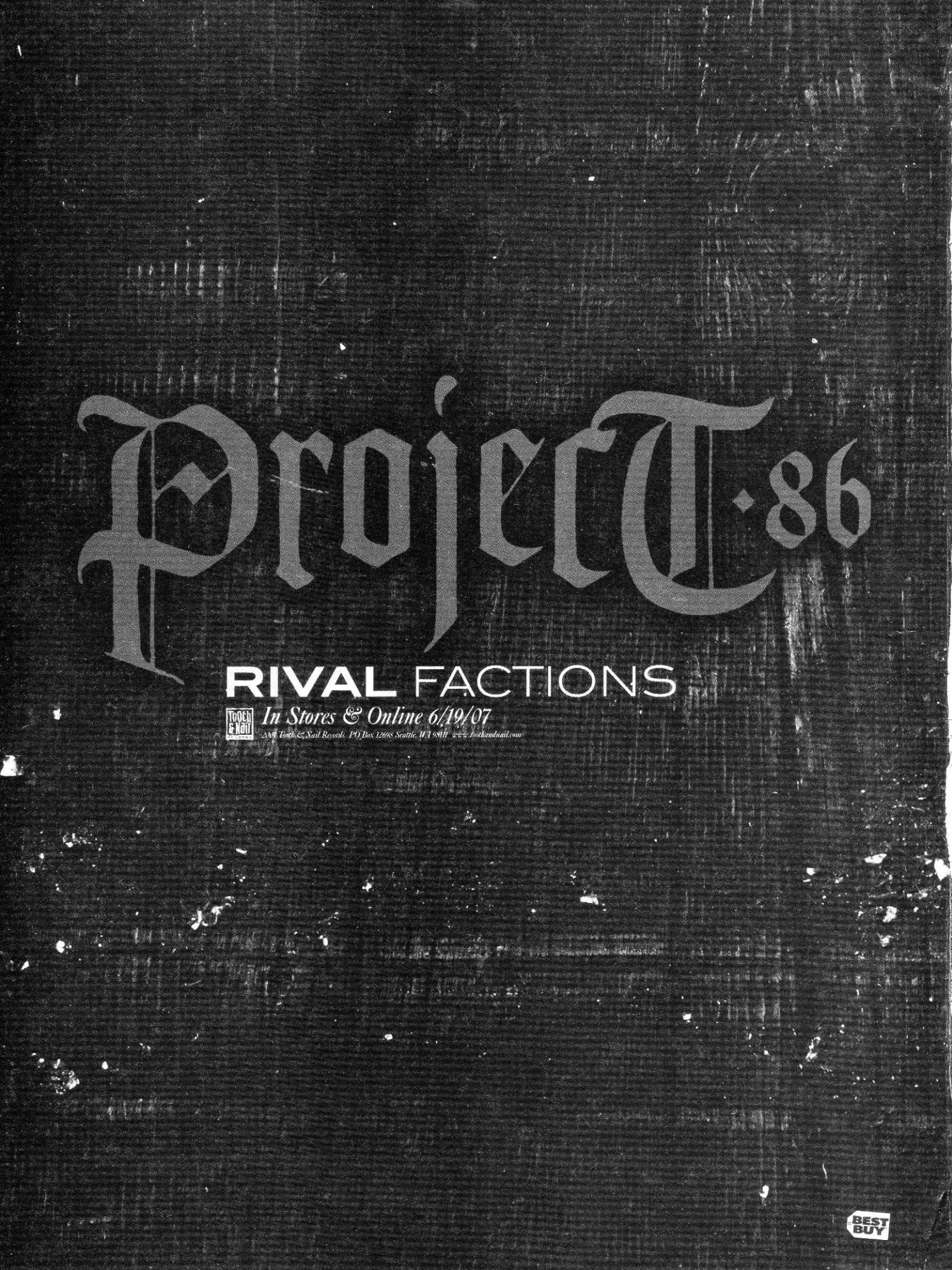
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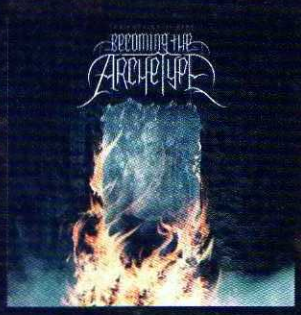

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july 2007

REVOLVER

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ON THE COVER

CRISTINA SCABBIA AND MARTA PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALETHEA AUSTIN IN LOS ANGELES

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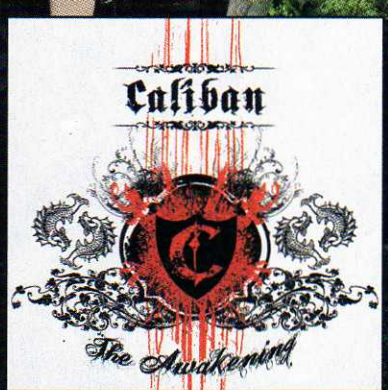

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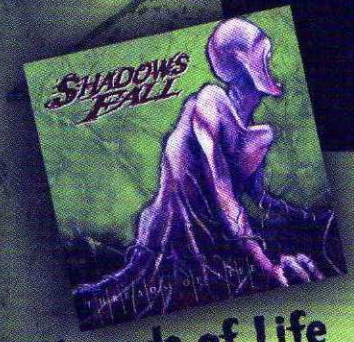

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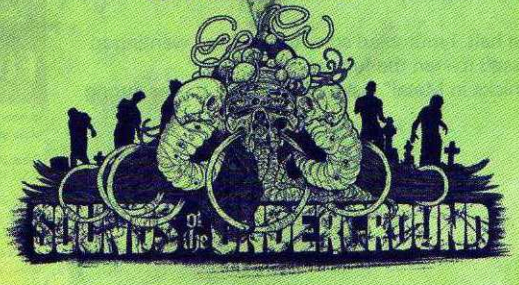

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THE FIRST TIME I MET Cristina Scabbia was at the cover shoot for the August 2004 Ozzfest issue of *Revolver*. It was an incredibly harrowing day that involved extracting a dozen artists from a Sharon-and-Ozzy–hosted press conference in order to do the photo, and I was in what could charitably be described as a "manic" state. So crazed was I, in fact, that it seemed perfectly reasonable to ask Scabbia, to whom I had been introduced only moments before: "Would it be cool for us to do a shot where Zakk Wylde is holding you in his arms in kind of a *Beauty and the Beast* thing?"

"Why would you want to do that?" she asked, arching an eyebrow.

"Because I think that our readers who are in prison would get a kick out of it," I replied.

Let's just say that that did not go over well, and I did what any man who has just really pissed off a lady does: I ran away.

My initial interaction with Marta was equally smooth. She was one of a group of musicians who I encountered backstage at Ozzfest 2006, and perhaps because she was so gracious and friendly, I felt that I should apologize for the fact that *Revolver* had run a photograph of her that she had found to be demeaning as the poster in last year's inaugural "Hottest Chicks in Metal" issue.

"Hey, I heard that poster last year really bummed you out. Sorry about that. We didn't mean to upset you," I said.

"Oh, that's cool," she replied. "I just thought the shot was sort of unnecessarily cheap, you know? Anyway, it's not your fault."

"Uh, yeah. It *is* my fault. I picked the picture," I blurted.

"Oh."

And with that, the conversation ground to a halt. I mumbled something about wanting to catch DragonForce's set and—yeah, you guessed it—ran the fuck away.

Welcome to the second annual "Hottest Chicks in Metal" issue of *Revolver*. It is as strong as my pimp hand is weak.

Tom Beaujour, Editor in Chief

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Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).
ISSN 1527-408x

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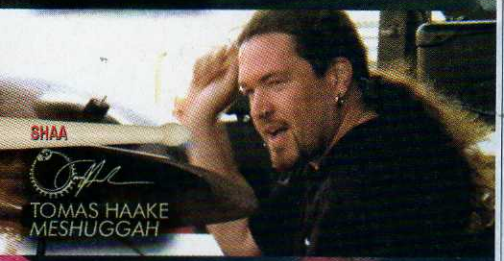

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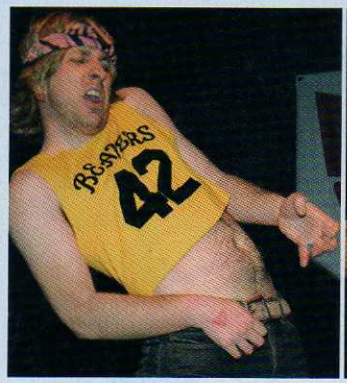

AIR GUITAR NATION SCREENING AND AFTERPARTY

MARCH 20, 2007, NEW YORK CITY

After a special screening of *Air Guitar Nation*, a documentary on the U.S. Air Guitar Championships that's been garnering rave reviews, there was a big bash at the Cutting Room on West 24th Street. Above, left: air-guitar competitor Andrew Litz, a.k.a. William Ocean. Above, right: Dan Crane, who appears as Björn Türoque in the film, with director Alexandra Lipsitz and Jay Jay French of Twisted Sister.

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MARCH 29, 2007, LIVE TRAX, BELLMORE, LONG ISLAND, NEW YORK

Clockwise from right: *Revolver* takes a licking and keeps on ticking at Live Trax in Bellmore, with Erick Bonesmith, Mistress Juliya, Suicide City skinsman Dan Lamagna, Tim of No. 37 Productions, and a friend; guitarist Gene Blank and vocalist–electric violinist Lourds Lane of Lourds; the mighty Borgo Pass sludge it up.

GET THRASHED AT THE BACKSEAT FILM FESTIVAL

APRIL 1, 2007, PHILADELPHIA

Get Thrashed: The Story of Thrash Metal **made its East Coast premiere in Philly, and *Revolver*—which chronicled the history of American thrash in our May issue—was there. From left: Seth Elmore of the Thret Band; independent producer-director Doug Sakmann; Eduardo, Hixon, and Well-Z, members of Jersey metallists Hixon; *Get Thrashed* director-producer Rich Ernest; venerable rock photographer Frank White; Hixon bassist Flip; and Zafer Ülkücü, director of programming for the Backseat Film Festival.**

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THRASH TALK

Thank you for highlighting true metal once again in your magazine. Shadows Fall, Metallica, Slayer, All That Remains, and Type O all in the same issue [The Thrash Issue, May 2007]?? After suffering through your AFI, Hinder, Buckcherry bullshit issues, I finally have a reason to renew my subscription. One question, though: Why is Phil Labonte of All That Remains wearing a Fall Out Boy shirt [in "Favorite Shit"]? Perhaps he was convinced the only way for real metal to get into your magazine was to disguise himself as an emo wannabe? Regardless, throw your horns in the air, and wave 'em like you just don't care—*Revolver* is metal again!!!
—Jim Hulsey, via email

First off, congrats on a nice retro-gem of an article ["The History of American Thrash"], along with great pics of them glorious days. But I must disagree (even with Dave Mustaine!)—grunge did NOT kill thrash. Thrash simply ate itself. People got caught up in the excitement and the rush of it all, and excess and euphoria took their toll on the most creative of minds back then, not to mention the record labels' greed squeezing every ounce of juice out of their "products" and forcing them out to tour incessantly. Same thing later happened to grunge bands. I only hope the future generations (at least the ones wise and talented enough to pay proper tribute to thrash's roots) acknowledge this and don't fall into this looping trap of blaming grunge for thrash's demise.
—SG, via email

The section on thrash was excellent, but what about the Canadian thrash bands like Voivod, Razor, or Sacrifice?? I know you said it was the history of American thrash, but give us Canucks some credit.
—Kyle Jarabak, via email

Some real fuckin' wicked justice for all with "The History of American Thrash"!! It's about time that you guys came through. Keep up the metal-up-your-ass articles, and don't ever poser out and lame out on bullshit bands.
—S.C., Florence, Arizona

"The History of American Thrash" was the best feature you guys have done in a long time. Fuck! You covered it all. Much respect to the staff on this one!
—Frankie Kaos, Rahway, New Jersey

Kudos for the great thrash feature, particularly the albums highlighted in "The *Revolver* Record Collection™: Part 12—Eighties American Thrash." It's rare that a mag will focus on the more extreme, "rotten to the core" (to quote fuckin' Overkill) thrash bands like Dark Angel, Possessed, and VIO-LENCE, in addition to the more well-known acts. My one complaint: Only American bands?! The kids who are just getting into this music need to know about the awesome Eighties German thrash scene (Kreator, Destruction, Sodom, Exumer, Deathrow, plus many more) and Canadian thrash (the mighty Sacrifice, Razor, and Slaughter). Kids who only know Andy Sneap as a producer need to know about his old band Sabbat—the guy's an awesome guitarist and songwriter. They need to know about Sepultura before they fucked themselves with all the tribal horseshit. You guys should step up to the plate and finish what you started. There's a whole world of awesome thrash out there that needs to be rediscovered. And just maybe, metal can regain a little more of its fuck yeah–ness. Oh, yeah. Loved the Municipal Waste article ["State of Euphoria"]. Those guys fucking rule!
—Simon Ruleman, via email

Great article on Machine Head ["Profiles"]. I never knew they were that close to breaking up! Hats off to them for overcoming the crazy shit life throws at you and producing another great album. Also, I loved the "History of American Thrash" article. It's funny how the thrash bands of the Eighties were scared that thrash was dead. Thrash was NEVER dead! The fans just got old, got demanding jobs, and had kids. It was to these kids that they passed down their fuckin' awesome taste in music. I was one of those kids. I was jamming Metallica, Megadeth, and others since the toddler years—no joke! And now that I'm 20, I've embraced the evolved version of thrash, among other forms of metal. So, yeah, thrash was never dead! They just had to wait till the next generation of thrashers could afford CDs of their own!
—Stephen K., Huntsville, Alabama

Your May issue was probably the best *Revolver* I have ever read. Shadows Fall, Machine Head, Clutch, and "The History of American Thrash" brought back memories of sitting in my high school's parking lot, getting stoned and listening to *Reign in Blood* and *Ride the Lightning* over and over again! I find two faults with it, though: When did Rick MAY play with Exodus?!?!?!?!? And you chose *The Dark* over Metal Church's first, self-titled album for your thrash record collection?!?!? *The Dark* isn't even close to being as much a classic as the first, although it's still a good record!
—Paul Tincher, Peoria, Illinois

BUT WAS IT AWESOME?

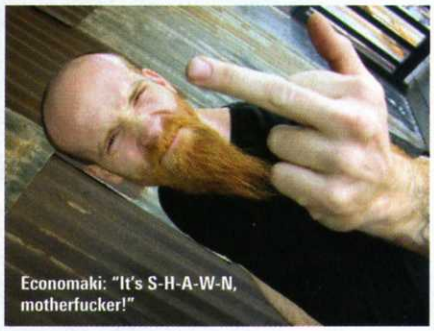
Thank you so much for putting Vains of Jenna ["Quick Fix No. 131"] in your April issue. Even though it was a small article, it was just awesome. That whole issue was awesome! I loved the articles on Dir en grey ["Profiles"], Kittie ["Warrior Souls"], and Shiny Toy Guns ["Profiles"]. The drawing of Trivium ["2007 Readers' Poll"] was hilarious. The May issue was also awesome. I loved the article on Marilyn Manson ["In the Studio"] and his new album, and I loved the article on the Taste of Chaos tour ["Reviews: Live and in Concert"], Chevelle ["Profiles"], and Bullet for My Valentine's new CD ["Studio News"]. Great job on everything.
—Tawny Wagner, Hamburg, Pennsylvania

GLAD WE CLEARED THAT UP

You really messed up the "facts" in "The Hard Facts: Odin" [April 2007]. Odin was the son of Bor and Bestla; his father was not Ymir, as you stated. Ymir was the primordial frost giant who was the first being formed in Ginnungagap. Adhumala, the primal cow, licked the sleeping frost giant, and Burri came forth, and later, so did Bor and Bestla. These two giants mated, and Bestla had three children: Odin, Vili, and Ve. So Odin's father is Bor.
—Anthony Thomas Chernetsky, Carson City, Nevada

WE F*©KED UP!

Machine Head, whom we profiled in the May 2007 issue, have released six, not five, studio albums. In a caption on page 66 of our history of American thrash, we misidentified Exodus guitarist Rick Hunolt. And in our June 2007 cover story on Corey Taylor, we misspelled Shawn Economaki's first name. Our apologies.


Economaki: "It's S-H-A-W-N, motherfucker!"

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ARSIS

▸ **"LUST BEFORE THE MAGGOTS CONQUEST"**
From *United in Regret*, out now on Willowtip

CEPHALIC CARNAGE

▸ **"ENDLESS CYCLE OF VIOLENCE"**
From *Xenosapien*, out May 29 on Relapse

NECROPHAGIST

▸ **"SEVEN"**
From *Epitaph*, out now on Relapse

THE FACELESS

▸ **"AUTOPSY"**
From *Akeldama*, out now on Sumerian

NORA

▸ **"SOMEBODY CALL SOMEBODY"**
Unmastered version of a track from *Save Yourself*, out June 19 on Trustkill

AS BLOOD RUNS BLACK

▸ **"THE BRIGHTER SIDE OF SUFFERING"**
From *Allegiance*, out now on Mediaskare

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IN THE STUDIO

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

VILLE VALO COULDN'T BE MORE BUMMED OUT ABOUT HOW GOOD **HIM**'S FORTHCOMING ALBUM PROMISES TO BE

Valo puts his best foot forward

"I'VE BEEN HAVING THESE MELTDOWNS like never before," says HIM's Ville Valo. The Finnish frontman is on the phone from Finnvox Studios in Helsinki, where the band is tracking the follow-up to 2005's *Dark Light*, tentatively titled *Venus Doom*. "When an album is on its way, it's always something. Last time, I had these panic attacks, and this time around I've been going through severe depression. The album's sounding great, and we're having a great time while doing it, but I'm really having a hard time."

The band (which also includes guitarist Linde Lindstrom, bassist Migé, drummer Gas, and keyboardist Burton) is once again working with *Dark Light* producer Tim Palmer, with coproduction and engineering help from Hiili Hiilesmaa, who produced 2003's *Love Metal*. "When you have two guys that know the band real well, everything goes a lot faster," says Valo. "And it's been nice for the band to record at home, because everyone can sleep in their own bed until the whole touring thing starts." So what, then, seems to be the problem?

"Oh, I don't fucking know," Valo laughs. "You prepare the songs and you work on lyrics for maybe years before you get to actually hear them played by the band, and then it's such an emotional thing that goes on when that happens—it's like you've got to destroy something beautiful to rebuild something even more beautiful. It's devastating to me, but it's devastating to me in a peculiarly beautiful way. It's like Edvard Munch's *The Scream*—but with pastel colors."

Never one to shy away from wearing his vampire heart on his sleeve, Valo says his lyrics for *Venus Doom* (which, like *Dark Light*, will be released in the U.S. on Sire Records) are more personal than

THE INDEX What they told us a year ago when *Revolver* was bought: "Welcome to Future, a small big company where passion rules and ideas flow freely like the sweet scented dew upon which Adam and ▶

ever, including a song for a friend who committed suicide two years ago. "Sometimes, when you write lyrics, you think you're writing them about somebody else," he explains. "But all of a sudden, when you read them again, you're like, Fucking hell, they're about me! That's kind of weird, and that's been happening a lot lately."

Still, Valo assures *Revolver* that he hasn't lost his macabre sense of humor. "It's all still tongue in cheek, to a certain extent," he says. "You can't take yourself too seriously—or *way* too seriously, you know? There's a fine line. My favorite is this song called 'Passion's Killing Floor.' The first line is 'My heart's a graveyard, baby!' And there's a song called 'Dead Lovers Lane': 'Crawl down Dead Lovers Lane/The maze of memories stained/And suck the blood out of my heart.' Stuff like that. So I'm still the depressed fucking gloomy motherfucker that I always was," he laughs.

Valo previously told *Revolver* that *Venus Doom* would sound like Black Sabbath meets Nineties shoegazers My Bloody Valentine, and the singer still stands by the description.

Valo puts his own spin on Munch's *The Scream*

VITAL STATS

ALBUM TITLE *VENUS DOOM*
RELEASE DATE JULY 10
PRODUCER TIM PALMER
RECORDING IN FINNVOX STUDIOS, HELSINKI, FINLAND

"Or U2 meeting Kyuss," he offers. "It's still very melodic—the keyboards are *super*-gay—very Depeche Mode, very Eighties—but everything else is super-fucking heavy. At times, it sounds like *Master of Puppets*–era Metallica, which is really cool. It sounds kind of macho, which is nice. So it's kind of like a she-male record."

Venus Doom, which will be mixed by Palmer and Valo at L.A.'s Paramount Recording, is slated for a July 10 release.

"We're trying to be fast," says Valo. "We're trying to be like the Seventies, when Whitesnake and everybody were doing three albums a year."

Wait, did you just say Whitesnake? "I *love* Whitesnake! David Coverdale is my fucking hero," Valo exults. "Though our brand of cock rock is a little more subtle. We are very sensitive on that side," he chuckles. "We do 'slide it in' occasionally—but only if *she* says so."

TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL
MORE NEW ALBUMS IN PROGRESS

The Black Dahlia Murder

Throwdown

Soilwork

If stress is the ultimate inspiration, then the new CD from **THE BLACK DAHLIA MURDER** should be groundbreaking. Last December, just as they were starting to write, drummer **PIERRE LANGLOIS** quit to become a cop, so for the next four months, the remaining bandmates did their demos with a drum machine and held auditions for his replacement. "A lot of the writing time was spent being super-nervous," recalls singer **TREVOR STRNAD**. "We were anxious for so long, and I think that tension comes across in the songs."

The pressure didn't abate. In March, Black Dahlia hired ex–**ALL THAT REMAINS** drummer **SHANNON LUCAS**, who had less than a month to write parts for the new songs. Then they began recording with producer Eric Rachel (**ATREYU**). They hope to fly to Florida next month to mix with Jason Suecof (**TRIVIUM**) and have the disc out by fall. It's a tight schedule, but Strnad insists the time crunch hasn't impaired their creativity. "This is the most futuristic thing we've ever done," he says. "There's a lot more variety in the songs, and there's even a track that reminds me of **DISSECTION**. We're really hauling ass."

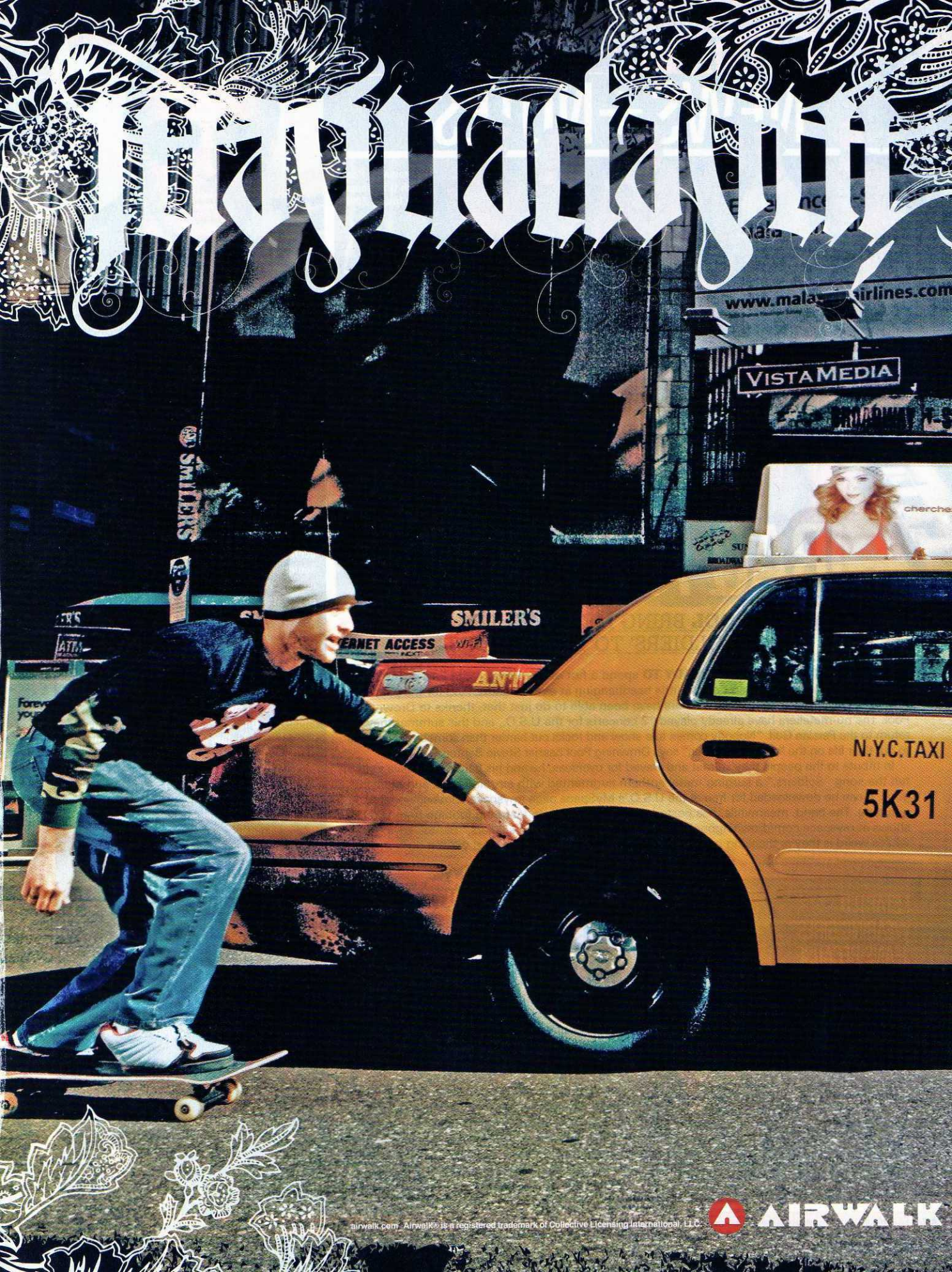
THROWDOWN have crafted a couple of brutal CDs with producers Greg Koller and Dom Macaluso. So why did they hook up with Mudrock, who manned the boards for radio-friendly hard-rock acts **GODSMACK** and **AVENGED SEVENFOLD**, for their new record, *Venom & Tears*? "We wanted our next album to be different than anything we've ever done before," says singer **DAVE PETERS**. "And he's definitely taking a more diverse approach than we're used to but still making sure the songs are fast and heavy." Throwdown hope to be done in time for a late-August release. "The production is better, but so are the songwriting and arrangements," Peters says. "This one's seriously gonna crush some skulls."

Guitarist and primary songwriter **PETER WICHERS**' 2005 exit from melodic death metallers **SOILWORK** seems to be the group's gain. "We're definitely more democratic now," says drummer **DIRK VERBEUREN**. "The whole band took part in the songwriting process, so the songs are much more diverse." Soilwork started writing with new guitarist **DANIEL ANTONSSON** (ex–**DIMENSION ZERO**) in January and have begun tracking with **PETER WILDOER** and **KLAS IDEBERG** at **DARKANE**'s studio in Sweden. **BJÖRN STRID**, meanwhile, is recording vocals in Vancouver with **STRAPPING YOUNG LAD**'s **DEVIN TOWNSEND**. Look for the CD in September.

ALSO IN THE STUDIO... Ex-**KORN** guitarist **BRIAN "HEAD" WELCH** is in Phoenix finishing his solo album with **NINE INCH NAILS** drummer **JOSH FREESE** and **FANTÔMAS** bassist **TREVOR DUNN**. It's slated for a late-July release. ★ Finnish doom/death veterans **AMORPHIS** are wrapping up their eighth CD at Sonic Pump studios in Helsinki. Mikko Karmila will mix. ★ Swedish crust-metal band **DISFEAR**, which features ex–**AT THE GATES** singer **TOMAS LINDBERG**, will record their new disc in Salem, Massachusetts, with **CONVERGE** guitarist **KURT BALLOU** producing. ★ **AM CONSPIRACY**, fronted by ex–**DROWNING POOL** singer **JASON "GONG" JONES**, are working with Rae Dileo (**FILTER**) on their debut, scheduled for July.

THROWDOWN: CHRISTOPHER GEORGE

◀ Eve subsisted before they were banished from the Garden of Eden. You'll know your desks by the hammering sound of the postage machine emanating from the adjacent mailroom. And plan on doing another 'Hottest ▶



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AIRWALK

Drowning Pool with U.S. troops in Iraq in 2006

IRAQ AND ROLL

DROWNING POOL BRING METAL TO THE TROOPS, ADD 'SOLDIERS' TO THEIR RANKS

WHEN YOU'RE GETTING READY TO spend a hot day fighting in the Iraq desert, few things feel better than doing a little headbanging at a metal show. And for the past two years, thousands of U.S. soldiers have been able to do just that, thanks to Drowning Pool. The nu-metallers have already played 12 concerts for the U.S.O., and this summer they'll return to the Persian Gulf. "Nobody comes to a show and rocks out harder than somebody who has to put their life on the line an hour later," says Drowning Pool bassist Stevie Benton.

In tribute to the people they've met and played for overseas, he and his bandmates have written the song "Soldiers," a surging metal anthem augmented with air-raid sirens and machine guns. It can be downloaded for free at the U.S.O.'s MySpace page (myspace.com/usoworldheadquarters). The band, meanwhile, has posted a video for the song featuring footage from U.S.O. shows at myspace.com/drowningpool. "It's amazing to talk to these soldiers," Benton says. "And what's weird is they're thanking us for coming over there. Man, it's the least we can do."

"I STARTED WEARING GIRLS' JEANS BECAUSE MY LEGS WERE SO THIN, AND I THINK BAGGY NU-METAL JEANS LOOK LIKE SH*T."

—TRIVIUM FRONTMAN MATT HEAFY

BLABBERMOUTH.NET SCOOP OF THE MONTH

WAL-MART ZAPS BUZZ

During **UNEARTH**'s recent tour with **SLAYER**, police at a Council Bluffs, Iowa, Wal-Mart arrested guitarist **BUZZ McGRATH** on suspicion of shoplifting, and now he's banned from the entire chain. According to McGrath, he was checking out a coat when he was grabbed by a store policeman and brought to the back for questioning. Before they released him, McGrath had to sign papers banning him. Of course, some would say they were doing him a favor.

Buzz McGrath

Weiland: "Beautiful" dreamer

IN BRIEF

A FRIGHTENING WEILAND, HIGH-I.Q. HEADBANGERS, AND SOME SAD FAREWELLS

VELVET REVOLVER frontman **SCOTT WEILAND** has written the haunting lead track for *Bug*, a new fright flick directed by William Friedkin (*The Exorcist*). Adapted from an Off-Broadway play by Tracy Letts, the movie stars Michael Shannon, who reprises his role as a war veteran overcome by swarms of insects. "I wanted to do something that went along with the feel of the movie," Weiland says of the song, "Beautiful Day." "It's very visual, and when it hits the chorus, it explodes into these huge 30-part harmonies." *Bug*, due in theaters May 25, also features creepy new music by **CHRIS CORNELL** and **SYSTEM OF A DOWN**'s **SERJ TANKIAN**.

A school in England may just have proved something we long suspected: Smart kids love heavy metal. In a University of Warwick survey, one third of participating students at the school's National Academy of Gifted and Talented Youth ranked the genre as their favorite music style, reported U.K. daily *The Independent*. "Perhaps the pressure associated with being gifted and talented can be temporarily forgotten with the aid of music," opined psychologist Stuart Cadwallader, who conducted the survey.

Former **KISS** guitarist **MARK ST. JOHN** died from a cerebral hemorrhage on April 5. He was 51. St. John joined Kiss after **VINNIE VINCENT** left in 1983, playing on 1984's *Animalize* and touring with the band until severe arthritis in his hands left him unable to perform. **CURTIS GRANT**, 39, the original guitarist for **AMERICAN HEARTBREAK**, died on March 20 from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. **BILL SABO**, original drummer for Cleveland-bred Eighties metal band **SHOK PARIS**, died from heart failure on March 16. He was 46.

Bill Sabo

HEAFY: GENE AMBO; WEILAND: JOHN SCIULLI / WIREIMAGE

◀ Chicks in Metal' issue. We know you did the first one as a goof, but that shit sold, so get on the stick and throw another one together, STAT." Number of people who actually got to say during the making of this issue, "The ▶

MARILYN MANSON

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HARDCORE NEWS

Cofounder Larry Scott and (far right) some of the label's notable releases

LABEL PROFILE

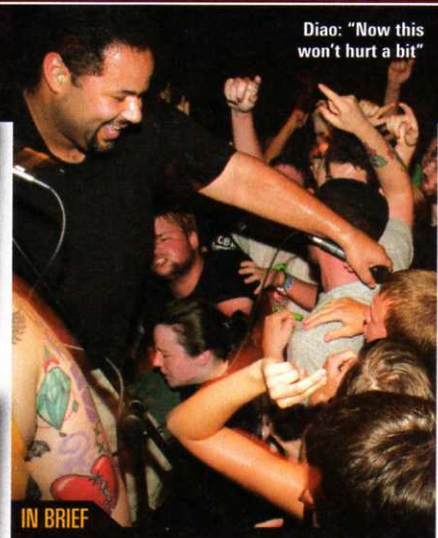
THINK FAST!

THE ANTIDOTE TO LABELS THAT BRING ON THE HEARTBREAK

ITS ROSTER MAY EMBODY POSITIVE-MINDED hardcore, but Think Fast! couldn't have existed without negative energy. Former Esteem and Flame Still Burns members Larry Scott and Charles Chaussinand launched the label in 2001, fueled by their dismay at everything from friends who'd forsaken their punk credentials to bands they'd seen exploited by trend-jumping label heads. "As hardcore goes in cycles of different 'styles,' sometimes the message and good reasons for being involved get lost," notes Scott.

One of the first acts to ink a deal with Think Fast! was Outbreak, whose vocalist, Ryan O'Connor, took over for Chaussinand in 2004. "The problem with a lot of [label owners] is that they haven't been in bands or experienced going on tour," says O'Connor, who runs his end of Think Fast! from Maine, while Scott mans the label's Florida HQ. "On the opposite end, operating a label has taught me a lot regarding what can realistically be put forth. The biggest things are communication and honesty. If every label practiced these things more, there would be a lot less heartbroken bands out there."

Across 27 releases to date—including exclusive vinyl for Sick of It All and Ignite in 2006—Scott and O'Connor have practiced what they preach, attracting increasingly bigger names in the process. Bullet Treatment (fronted by the Bronx's Matt Caughthran) and Between the Wars (featuring Ensign's Tim Shaw and Thursday alum Bill Henderson) both released EPs on Think Fast! this past year, while Korea's first-ever straightedge band, the Geeks, provided the label's first international breakthrough with 2007's *Every Time We Fall*. "Since the label started," Scott says, "I've seen an increase of support for bands we put out [and] other, similar bands, which seems like a good direction to me."



Diao: "Now this won't hurt a bit"

IN BRIEF

GOOD CLEAN FLICK

Vegan-straightedge wise guys **GOOD CLEAN FUN** had such a blast recording their first-ever video last year (for "The MySpace Song"), they've decided to make a feature-length movie—and for once, they're not joking. "We're finishing work on the screenplay now," frontman **ISSA DIAO** tells *Revolver*. "We hope to shoot it this summer for release later this year or the beginning of next." As for the film's subject matter, Diao says to expect a high-concept/lowbrow-comedy flick that's "part *Say Anything*, part *Rock 'n' Roll High School*."

FAST + FURIOUS ★ D.C. dark-hardcore legends **DAMNATION A.D.**, who were active from 1992 to 1998 and have been reunited since 2005, have signed to Victory. Their label debut, *In This Life or the Next*, is due in stores June 12 and will feature appearances from **WES EISOLD** (GIVE UP THE GHOST), **JOHN HENRY** (DARKEST HOUR), **KARL BUECHNER** (EARTH CRISIS, FREYA), and **FALL OUT BOY**'s **PATRICK STUMP** and **PETE WENTZ**. ★ 1917 Records will reissue *Ice Grillz*, the 2005 CD from hip-hop/hardcore mashup artists **COLD WORLD**, this summer; the band is now recording its label debut for Deathwish Inc. ★ In other 1917 news, label owner Sean Riley is cosponsoring this year's Sound and Fury fest (soundandfuryfestival.com), set for July 27–29 in Ventura, California, and featuring **108** and **BLACKLISTED**, among others. ★ **PYGMY LUSH** (which includes former members of **PG99**, **CITY OF CATERPILLAR**, and **MALADY**) have finished recording their Robotic Empire debut with **CONVERGE**'s **KURT BALLOU**; look for the record—which Robotic Empire's Andy Low describes as "a mix tape of **HIS HERO IS GONE**, **BRIAN ENO**, **TOM WAITS**, **THE BLACK HEART PROCESSION**, **BORN AGAINST**, **NIRVANA**, and everything in between"—this September. ★ **MOTÖRHEAD**-worshipping Kentucky crustcore crew **COLISEUM** are also in the studio with Ballou; look for their Relapse debut in August.

Cold World

COLD WORLD: ROBBY REDCHEEKS

MY WARPED TOUR CHECKLIST

JORDAN BROWN
Set Your Goals

- **SUNBLOCK** "My gnarliest burn ever was 2003: One week after the tour, I attempted to peel my crackling skin and successfully ripped the first layer of flesh from my face. Hell hath no burn like that of the Warped Tour sun."
- **SQUIRT GUNS AND WATER BALLOONS** "I'm so down for any water challenge. I want to get some huge teams going against a lot of the bands on one of the off days. All we need is an open field and a BBQ."
- **FRIENDS** "This might sound cheesy, but summer and music are nothing without friends to hang out with."
- **NEW FOUND GLORY** "Never disappoints. They're definitely my No. 1 band to see on this year's Warped."

Catch Set Your Goals on the first leg of the Warped Tour, June 28–July 15

upper part of the thigh is a more sexual area, so don't cover it up with copy," and not get fired because it was totally appropriate given the context: 1 ★ Number of staff members who will get a call from their dad sometime

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BLACK+DEATH METAL NEWS

Bergraven

TURNS OUT YOU DON'T NEED SATAN TO FIND YOUR WAY TO THE DARK SIDE

"I DO NOT THINK ABOUT GENRE when I write music—there is nothing less important," says Bergraven mastermind and multi-instrumentalist Pär Gustafsson. "The only thing I'm sure of is that Bergraven should by my definition not be classified as a black-metal band for the simple reason of not being satanic in any way."

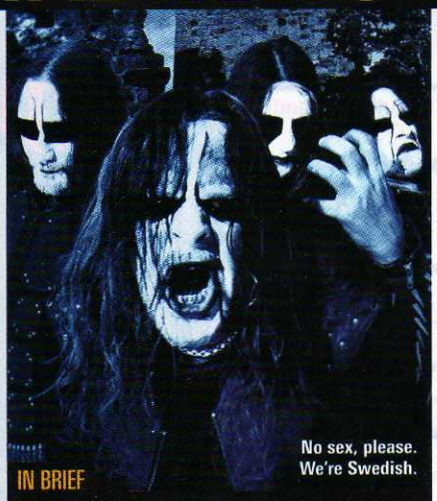
But while the group's mesmerizing stateside debut, *Dödsvisioner* (Hydra Head), might be totally Satan-free, there's no denying the world-eating blackness within. The disc, whose title means "death visions," boasts progressive arrangements, bizarre tones, and hypnotic riffery that would make the dudes from Enslaved break down in tears. Featuring lyrics written and sung in Gustafsson's native Swedish, it was composed entirely by the frontman and recorded with live drums courtesy of session musician Perra Karlsson, also of Swedish death-metal squad Nominon.

"The aim is to make music and lyrics about my visions of death," Gustafsson says. "I know that the ultimate sound of darkness is unachievable, but that's what keeps me going on."

That said, he doesn't believe black metal has a monopoly on darkness. "Just listen to the *Closer* album by Joy Division—that surely is darkness creeping up on you," Gustafsson points out. "Even Chris Isaak gives me more dark feelings than 90 percent of the so-damn-occupied-trying-so-hard-to-be-evil bands."

FAST + FURIOUS ★ Guitarist **CHRISTOPHER AMOTT** has rejoined **ARCH ENEMY**. ★ **HATE ETERNAL** bassist **RANDY PIRO** has quit. **CANNIBAL CORPSE**'s **ALEX WEBSTER** will fill in for the recording of the band's next CD, tentatively due in October. ★ Ex-**MAYHEM** vocalist **MANIAC** has formed a doom-influenced black-metal outfit called **SKITLIV**. ★ **DARKTHRONE** singer-guitarist **NOCTURNO CULTO** has completed a black-metal documentary titled *The Misanthrope*, to be released on DVD through Peaceville with a bonus CD of music composed by Culto himself. ★ Swedish death legends **ENTOMBED** have set a September 18 European release for *Serpent Saints—The Ten Amendments*. No word on a U.S. release. ★ Death-metal supergroup **BLOODBATH** (featuring members of **HYPOCRISY**, **KATATONIA**, and **WITCHERY**) are recording a mini-CD, due later this year. ★ **GROTESQUE**—whose lineup includes current **DISFEAR** and former **AT THE GATES** frontman **TOMAS LINDBERG**—have broken up due to "internal differences," according to a statement.

Bloodbath

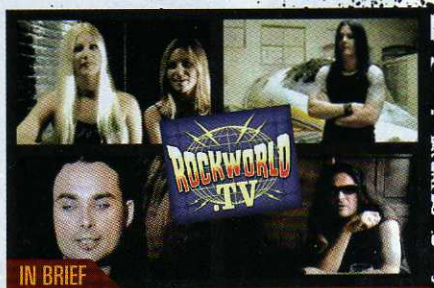


No sex, please. We're Swedish.

IN BRIEF

DARK FUNERAL GO TO HELL FOR DEMONIC PORN

As if preparing two double-DVD sets of their own for release later this year weren't enough, Swedish black-metal maniacs **DARK FUNERAL** will contribute the song "King Antichrist" (from 2005's *Attera Totus Sanctus*) to the soundtrack of *Club Satan: The Witches Sabbath*, "the first-ever satanic porno," according to its creators, Extreme Associates. The band members also make a cameo as demons in the flick, which hit DVD stores in March. "This one chick is being thrown into hell, where we await her to make an offering to the Witches Sabbath," Dark Funeral guitarist **LORD AHRIMAN** tells *Revolver*. "I have no idea how they will edit and/or feature the scenes we shot, but just to make it clear to everybody, we do not participate in any sex scenes."



IN BRIEF

'MURDER' FOR HIRE

In what might be black metal's first foray into the world of on-demand viewing, the British website rockworld.tv is currently offering *Murder Music*, a 64-minute documentary on the genre, for online streaming. The film, which features interviews with members of **DIMMU BORGIR**, **MAYHEM**, **VENOM**, **SATYRICON**, and **CRADLE OF FILTH**, costs about $2 to stream for a 24-hour period, after which it rears up and stabs the viewer several times in the neck, back, and head.

LORD AHRIMAN: ED WESTMACOTT / RETNA

in the next month saying (insert French accent here), "Congratulations. I see you have begun a new career as a pornographer!": 1 ★ Number of years of therapy it has taken for said staff member to let statements such as

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Josh Scogin

THE CHARIOT'S FRONTMAN MAKES THE MAGIC HAPPEN WITH LITTLE MORE THAN DIY MERCH AND FREE THREADS

SUNGLASSES "These are from H&M in New York. Driving in the daylight all the time, it's a must to have sunglasses—otherwise, you find yourself squinting all day long."

T-SHIRT "This is just a black pocketed tee from Wal-Mart. For this tour, we bleached stuff to sell. When we got done bleaching the shirts, we looked at them and thought, We should just wear these onstage. They're just so trashy looking."

CONVERGE HOODIE "I got this from them when we were on the Sounds of the Underground tour together. It's the only hoodie that I own. I'm really impressed by the music they put out, and they're great dudes as well, so it's definitely not a problem for me to wear this."

TOUR PASSES "I'm not one of those guys that rocks 70 old tour passes, but if I'm on tour, I have to have a tour pass. I've gotten in trouble before trying to get in a venue and they don't know who I am."

PANTS "I wear these because they're really stretchy. When I'm playing live, the biggest problem I usually have, and most bands we've toured with have, is getting holes in the crotch." He laughs. "You can sew up holes in the knee and make the pants last, but as soon as you get a hole in the crotch, you're done."

DRAVEN SNEAKERS "Pretty much the only shoes I own are Draven shoes. I have three or four pairs. They're nice enough to give us free shoes."
ANNA BLUMENTHAL

AMERICAN APPAREL SOCKS "I don't really wear white or black socks—only brown, red, yellow, and green. I like black socks, but if I have black pants and black shoes on, it's too much black. It's good to see something a little different."

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THE CHARIOT'S NEW ALBUM, *THE FIANCÉE* (SOLID STATE), IS IN STORES NOW

this not devastate him: 18 ★ Number of *Revolver* staffers who have seen Marta naked: 1 ★ Number of male *Revolver* staff members who have seen Marta naked: 0 Yesssssssssss ★ Finally, a fond farewell to Kurt Vonnegut, a

PHOTO BY JACK THOMPSON

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What should a band do if PR people and stylists try to change their look?
—Scott, via email

If you're happy with your image, tell them to fuck off!!!!! Who knows—you may end up being the next Mötley Crüe or Kiss! Kick some ass!!!!

Do you think it's important to expand your musical tastes and enjoy music other than heavy metal, even if you're predominantly into heavy metal?
—C.J., Virginia

Heavy metal will always be No. 1 and closest to your heart. But you gotta diversify your bonds, ninja! If you went to Baskin-Robbins and they had one flavor, it would suck. That's why they have 31! Same with your iTunes. Break it up!

I'm a bass player, and the rhythm guitarist in my band keeps saying bass players are lazier than guitarists, since they have less strings to play. What do you think?
—Josh H., Windsor, Ontario, Canada

I'd much rather have a solid bass player than a failed noodling guitarist trying to play bass!!!! Tell him you might have two less strings than he does, but yours are bigger and hold down the low end really well!!!! Hell, yeah!!!

I'm a metalhead, and there's this hip-hop chick at school who keeps asking me out. She's cute and all, but I hate rap and hip-hop! Plus, I already have someone else on my mind. Anyway, this chick has asked me out four times, and I've always said no. The fourth time, I got mad and raised my voice, and the next day in the hall, we made eye contact but she quickly looked away, and I could tell she was about to cry. Now I feel really, really bad and kinda feel like asking her out just to make her feel better. Should I?
—Julian, via email

Take a shot at it! Maybe you can convert her from her hip-hop-lovin' ways! Sounds like fun. She might really be a rocker at heart and just rollin' with what's popular in school.

I'm a 15-year-old girl, and I love to rock. I want to be the frontwoman of a band someday, but every time I turn around, someone's doubting me. I write and play music constantly. My guy friends are always saying girls can't rock and that the guys who play in bands that have girls in them are wusses. How can I get people to take me seriously?
—Mandy, Assumption, Illinois

It always seems that some men are almost scared by women trying to succeed in something. Isn't that funny? Rock has no gender. Keep on rockin', girl!

My boyfriend and I have been going out for a year and a half now, and my parents hate him. But I'm completely in love with him, as is he with me, and I don't want anyone else. Recently, he decided to go away to trade school—he'll be gone for 14 months. The problem is, I have one more year of high school left. I know we'll be together when he gets back, but if I choose not to wait and go and live with him instead, I can't go to college. (Those are my parents' rules: Live at home and go to college, or live on my own and support myself.) I don't know what to do. Should I move in with him and finish school where he lives?
—Morgan, Illinois

If you truly believe in this relationship, maybe you could try moving to be with him and supporting yourself. But I believe that you really should let the distance prove how strong your relationship is.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS FOR VINNIE OR CRISTINA TO: ***Revolver*, 149 5th Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10010**
or **AskVinnie@revolvermag.com** or **AskCristina@revolvermag.com**

VINNIE: JOE GIRON

great author who penned some fine tomes (*Slaughterhouse-Five*, *Breakfast of Champions*, *Cat's Cradle*). Not only that, but his discovery that the asterisk, *, looks uncannily like a human anus prefigured the dirty emoticons (.)(.), 0.

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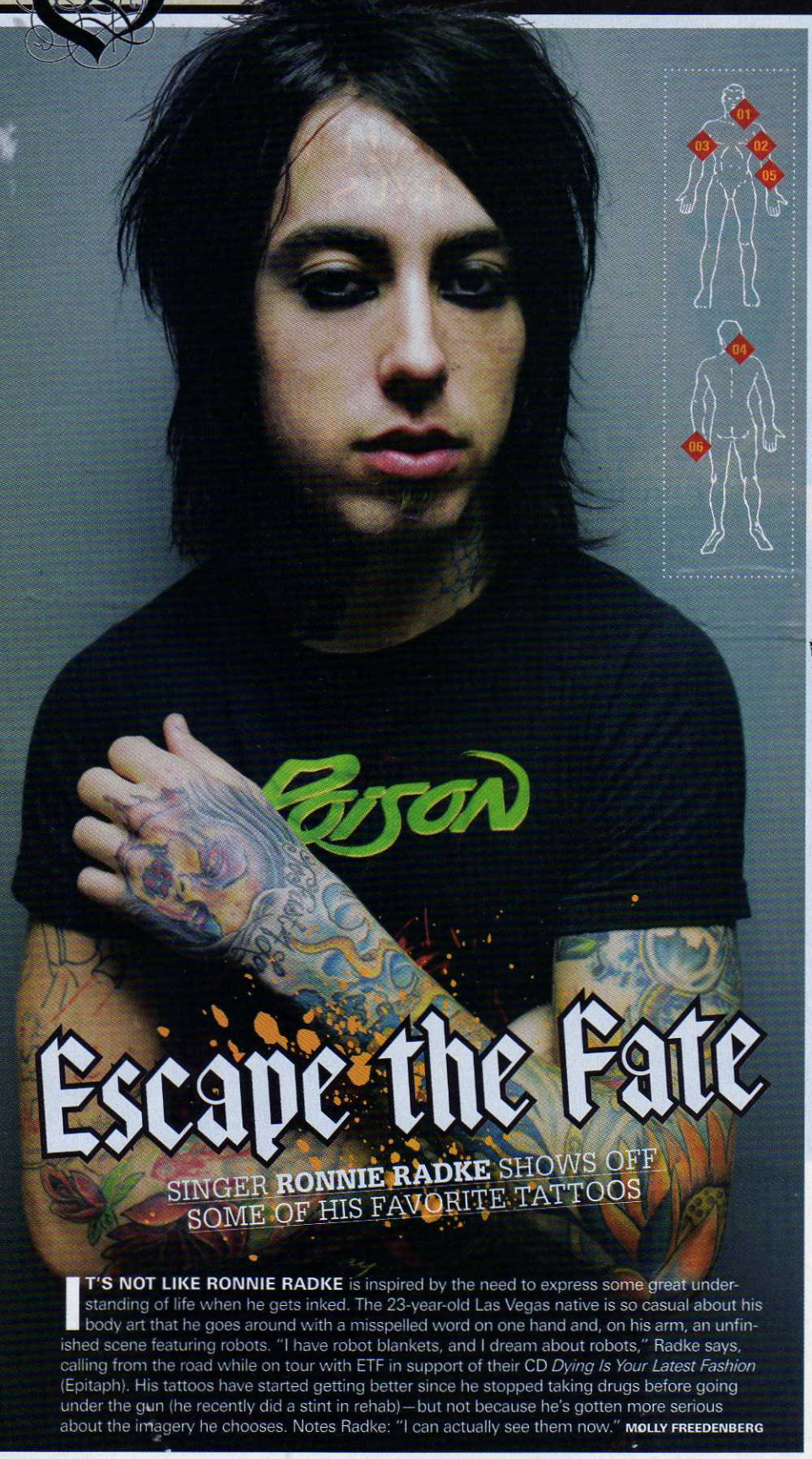


Escape the Fate

SINGER **RONNIE RADKE** SHOWS OFF SOME OF HIS FAVORITE TATTOOS

IT'S NOT LIKE RONNIE RADKE is inspired by the need to express some great understanding of life when he gets inked. The 23-year-old Las Vegas native is so casual about his body art that he goes around with a misspelled word on one hand and, on his arm, an unfinished scene featuring robots. "I have robot blankets, and I dream about robots," Radke says, calling from the road while on tour with ETF in support of their CD *Dying Is Your Latest Fashion* (Epitaph). His tattoos have started getting better since he stopped taking drugs before going under the gun (he recently did a stint in rehab)—but not because he's gotten more serious about the imagery he chooses. Notes Radke: "I can actually see them now." **MOLLY FREEDENBERG**

01 FLOWER WITH SKULL Radke and Max Green, Escape the Fate's bassist and Radke's friend since age 16, got matching tattoos. On their necks. "It was a me-and-him bonding thing," explains Radke.

02 GUNS N' ROSES TRIBUTE Radke actually got to meet GN'R's former bassist, Duff McKagan, at ETF's show at the El Rey in L.A. in March. McKagan arrived just in time to hear the band cover "Paradise City." "I freaked out," Radke recalls. "I figured we played it wrong, but he was cool. And he's got a really hot wife."

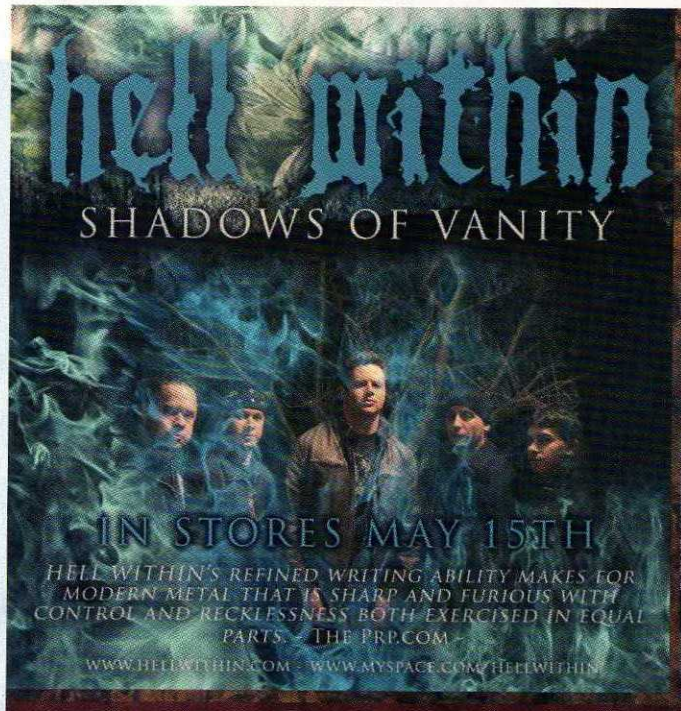
03 BUTTERFLY TURNING INTO A STRAIGHT RAZOR Rocker meets stripper. Rocker beds stripper. Rocker wakes up with this tattoo.

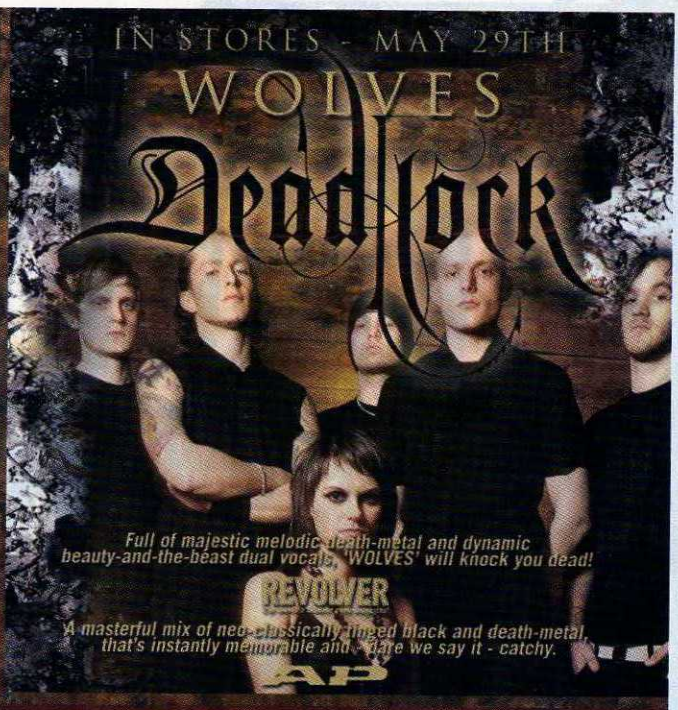
04 DAGGER AND 'DAD' Radke got this tattoo to honor his father, who raised him on his own. But Radke's dad, who boasts full sleeves, laments that the neck tat means that now his son can never get a real job. "I probably can't," Radke agrees. "But no one wants a real job."

05/06 HAND GRENADE/SEVERED HEAD The frontman has heartbreak written all over his body—literally. An ex-girlfriend designed this heart-shaped hand grenade with the banner "Live, Love, Let Go" while the two were breaking up. To mark another failed relationship, Radke sports a severed head on his left hand with lips sewn shut and the declaration "To [sic] fast for love" scrawled across the top. "Her name's Mandy Murders," Radke says. Maybe he should have seen it coming.

8=====>, etc., that we all now use in our everyday cyber communications. Wait, what? You've never seen those before? You mean you still actually type "yabbos," "nana," and "wee-wee"? Get with it, daddy-o.

PHOTOS BY ALETHEA AUSTIN





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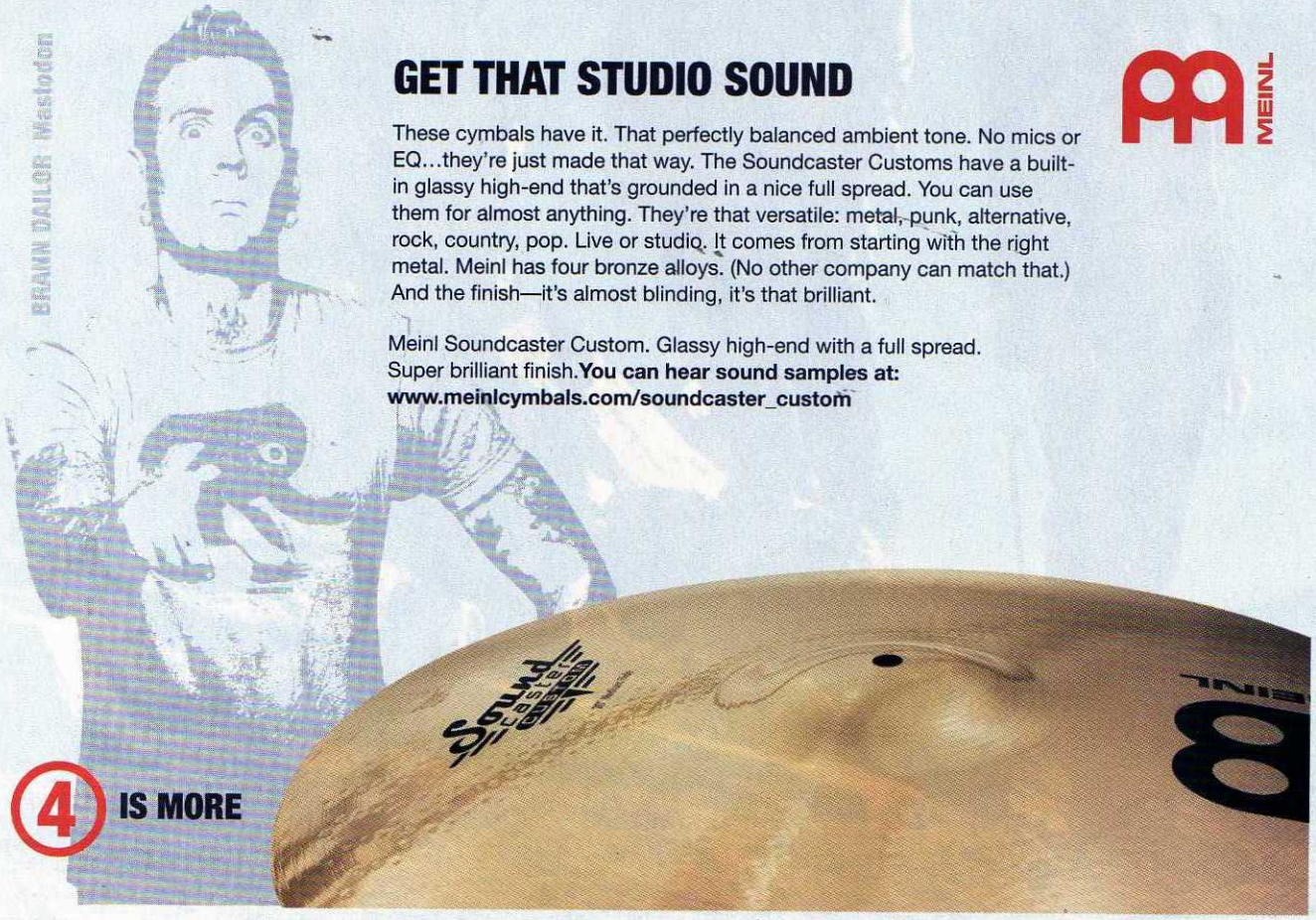

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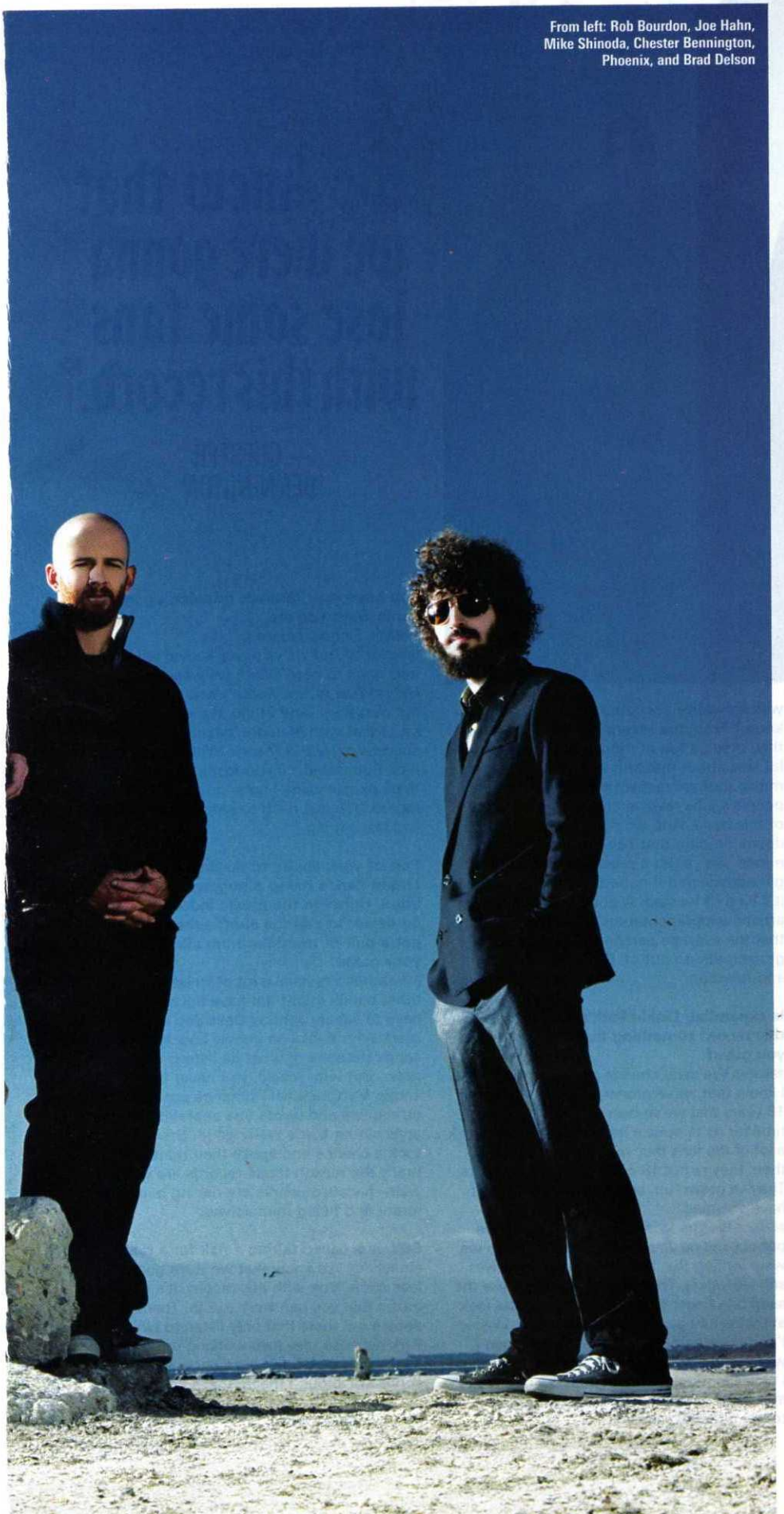
4 IS MORE

Linkin Park

WITH 'MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT,' HARD ROCK'S RADIO KINGS DEMONSTRATE THAT WHILE THERE MAY BE TWO "I"'S IN "LINKIN," THERE ARE NONE IN "TEAM"



From left: Rob Bourdon, Joe Hahn, Mike Shinoda, Chester Bennington, Phoenix, and Brad Delson

THE NEW LINKIN PARK ALBUM, *Minutes to Midnight*, began with a simple request. "I remember telling our management, 'Go get us seven hard drives,'" says Mike Shinoda, the Grammy-winning group's programming guru and covocalist. "Each guy's gonna get one, and then one is gonna be the band drive." Shinoda's idea was for each of Linkin Park's six members—Shinoda, singer Chester Bennington, guitarist Brad Delson, bassist Phoenix, drummer Rob Bourdon, and DJ Joe Hahn—to start laying down ideas for the L.A.-based band's third studio album. Each musician would work on his own, then join forces with someone else in the group he'd never written with before. "You can imagine the amount of material we had within the first three months," Shinoda laughs.

In case you can't, *Minutes to Midnight* contains 12 tracks, which is only a fraction of the 150 or so Linkin Park recorded with producer Rick Rubin. "We've never worked as hard on anything as we worked on this," Delson says. The effort is audible: Though it contains traces of the sound that made Linkin Park one of the biggest acts in the world, *Midnight* is a purposeful step away from the jock-friendly rap-rock of 2000's *Hybrid Theory* and 2003's *Meteora*. More textural and organic—and less immediately hook-laden—than their previous work, it's the result of 18 months' worth of collaborative experimentation. "We wanted everyone to get involved and bring everything they could to the table," says Bennington. "This was an opportunity for everyone to really jump in and get their hands dirty."

REVOLVER *Minutes to Midnight* tweaks the Linkin Park sound in some pretty significant ways. Was that the aim from the get-go?

MIKE SHINODA When we first got together with Rick, we told him we wanted to do something that was really different, but something that people would be able to recognize as us. And those two things kind of contradict each other. It would be easy for us to change in many different ways. When we were demoing songs, we had stuff that sounded like the Neptunes meets AC/DC; stuff that sounded like super-heavy metal with boom-bap Eighties rap beats; stuff that was really mellow; stuff that was really hip-hop; stuff that was industrial. We covered so much ground because we had so much time to do it.

BRAD DELSON We had no deadline. We could just work on it until we were done.

SHINODA We tried to let each idea be as pure as it could be. It's easy to self-edit when you're writing. You've got an idea on guitar. If you're not thinking, you might sit down and

"We knew that we were gonna lose some fans with this record."

— CHESTER BENNINGTON

grab the same guitar you always grab, put it through the same amp you always use, and record it in the same way you always record. That was the opposite of what we wanted to do this time. We wanted to sit down with that idea and say, OK, before I pick up an instrument, what instrument should I play it on? Immediately, that changed the whole landscape of what we were doing.

The lyrics are more direct than they have been, as well.

CHESTER BENNINGTON I think we're really comfortable with ourselves, probably more than we ever have been. And in being more comfortable, I think what you say comes out more clearly. We've always tried to leave our lyrics open to interpretation, but the reality is that people connect with songs for a reason. On this record, I think it's a little less opaque; there's more clarity.

For many lyricists, that opacity is reassuring.

BENNINGTON It's like a security blanket. There's something good about it, but it can also be dangerous. The same is true with being too specific. If you're too indirect and people don't understand what you're talking about, they can't really connect with the song. There's a fine line between leaving things open and getting your point across, and I think on this record we've gotten closer to that line more than we have in the past.

Is making these kinds of transformations scary?

SHINODA I think we all felt a little nervous about changing the sound. The old sound was so widely accepted and loved, you know? From the record company's end, they made a ton of money on it. We're a lot less about that and a lot more about the music, but we respect the fact that a lot of people's jobs revolve around the success of this band. And we don't wanna let fans down. Finding that balance is tricky. In our minds, we've got a message that we wanna get across, and if nobody listens to it, then it's kind of wasted. A good song is not just artistic experimentation. It's also something that the average person can listen to and get something out of. Good design is form *and* function.

Is expanding Linkin Park's audience with this record something that's important to you guys?

SHINODA We can't change our audience. But I know that we've grown up a lot in the past 10 years that we've been a band. It's a nice time for us to open a new chapter. And I think a lot of the fans that've been with us since then, they're not 18 or 20 years old anymore. They've grown up, and their musical tastes have changed.

BENNINGTON The kids that were 15 when we put out *Hybrid Theory* are now 23. When we were writing that record, half the band was still teenagers. That's crazy—it seems like the snap of a finger to me. But you've gotta look at things and go, OK, people change. I know I'm not the same person that I was when I was writing *Hybrid Theory*. The good feelings I have are much different than the good feelings I had back then. Bad days are bad for totally different reasons.

You hope your fans are growing up in the same ways you are.

SHINODA Fingers crossed.

BENNINGTON But we've never known what our fans want to hear. When we were writing *Hybrid Theory*, we weren't writing for anyone but ourselves. And I think we lost a little bit of that with *Meteora*, because of the success of *Hybrid Theory*. With this record, Rick Rubin said, "If you focus on what you think people want, you're gonna write a bad record. You just need to write music that you feel like writing."

Part of your ability to do that stems from Linkin Park's being a hugely successful band, right? In the music industry, it must be easier to call the shots when you've got a pair of multiplatinum albums to your name.

BENNINGTON We have a lot of freedom that other bands might not have because they have to satisfy Johnny Desk Job at the label, who thinks he knows how to write songs because of what he listens to on the radio. But with music, you never fucking know. My Chemical Romance put their balls on the line and wrote this operatic, theater-style album that's really good. Green Day took a chance and spoke their minds. And that's the reason those records are doing well—because people are risking being different and being themselves.

Still, it *is* called taking a risk for a reason.

BENNINGTON We knew that we were gonna lose some fans with this record. It's not music that you can work out to. There are people out there that only listen to Linkin Park because they love working out to our songs, but they don't even know what the songs are about. I mean, that's cool, thanks for your support. But this is not the record for you. **MIKAEL WOOD**

PHOTOS BY JAMES MINCHIN

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From Autumn to Ashes

LOSING THEIR SINGER MAY BE THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO THEM

WHEN BEN PERRI, THE FORMER frontman for Long Island, New York, post-hardcore heavy hitters From Autumn to Ashes, abruptly left the band in 2005, drummer-singer Francis Mark stepped in and took over vocal duties. But Mark and his remaining bandmates—guitarist Brian Deneeve and bassist Josh Newton—quickly regrouped, adding a second guitarist (Rob Lauritsen) and a touring drummer (Jeff Gretz), before recording their just-released album, *Holding a Wolf by the Ears* (Vagrant), with producer Brian McTernan. The band is now in the midst of a U.S. tour, coheadlining with Haste the Day, but *Revolver* caught up with Mark to discuss the new disc, America's culture of conformity, and the benefits of starting over.

REVOLVER **What was it like making the shift from drummer-singer to lead singer–drummer for this album?**

FRANCIS MARK It was actually pretty exciting and kind of a welcome challenge, because maybe things were starting to get a little stagnant. It kind of forced us to really reinvent the band.

How does *Holding a Wolf by the Ears* differ musically from your last album, *Abandon Your Friends*?

It's funny because the most common criticism of *Abandon Your Friends* was that it's not that heavy or that it was lighter than the other records. But I'm not sure where people got that idea from, because if you listen to it, some of the songs on it are the heaviest things we've ever written. So I would say that *Holding a Wolf by the Ears* is heavier, but perhaps it's not. Maybe it's just more raw and thrashy. We just set up and let loose, and it just sounds like a couple guys having fun.

In the song "Delusions of Grandeur," you sing, "You could be something priceless, or you could be a waste of time." How does one tell the difference?

Maybe sometimes it's impossible to tell the difference. Or maybe there is no difference, actually. Everything in the world has the potential to be great or to be worthless. It depends on what you do with it, I guess.

This is your fourth full-length album in seven years, and you've also released two EPs.

What do you do with all your spare time?

I've been painting quite a bit, actually.

What sort of things do you paint?

Sort of like weird landscapes of foreign planets and the weird little creatures that inhabit them.

Is it going to find its way into album artwork, or has it?

Yeah, I actually did the cover art for our new record and all the illustrations inside it. But that's just different kinds of drawings. The other paintings have more to do with nature.

What was it like shooting the industrial-looking, high-concept video for the first single, "Pioneers"?

It was pretty fun. We were in this crazy factory where I'm pretty sure they manufacture bicycles, and it was probably the biggest to-do we ever made out of a video. It's the most professional one we've made so far, I think. It's kind of an adaptation of this short story [by Shirley Jackson] called *The Lottery*.

Does that story tie into the thoughts or feelings behind the song?

It sure does. It's about how the society that we live in right now is kind of designed for people to work themselves to death and never get an opportunity to enjoy anything or do any real thinking. I don't think the way America is right now promotes the individual whatsoever. So it's about breaking free from that and trying not to be brainwashed. Instead of consuming popular culture, you should go out and try to create your own culture.

What's your relationship with departed singer Ben Perri like now?

We don't have one, to be honest. He did some pretty dishonest things to our guitar player, Brian—they were roommates—and he doesn't possess the qualities that I look for in a friend. Now that we're not in a band together, we really don't have any reason to hang out. I wish him luck in whatever he does, but I don't need to be involved in it.

What are you most looking forward to on this tour?

I really just look forward to getting onstage every night, because I think a lot of kids are coming out to these shows very skeptical about what they're going to see, like they're kind of waiting for us to fall flat on our faces so they can say, "I told you so." But I kind of like the idea that we're starting all over again. I like having to get onstage and prove it to people and win people over. **NIKI D'ANDREA**

The cover of the band's new CD, *Holding a Wolf by the Ears*, features artwork by vocalist Francis Mark.

Clockwise from left: Brian Deneeve, Josh Newton, Rob Lauritsen, and Francis Mark

Porcupine Tree

ENGLAND'S PROG PRINCES RETURN WITH A CONCEPT ALBUM FOR—AND ABOUT—THE A.D.D. GENERATION

From left: Gavin Harrison, Richard Barbieri, Steven Wilson, and Colin Edwin

"IT'S IRONIC THAT WHEN ATTENTION spans are getting shorter, records are getting longer and longer," says Porcupine Tree mastermind Steven Wilson. "It's almost like music is measured by the yard now." In reaction to this trend toward long-windedness (embodied most notably by bands like the Mars Volta and Tool), Porcupine Tree kept their latest, *Fear of a Blank Planet* (Atlantic), to a tidy 51 minutes—despite the fact that more than half of the album's six tracks are over seven minutes long, and its sprawling centerpiece, "Anesthetize," is nearly 18. Featuring guest shots from Rush guitarist Alex Lifeson and King Crimson guitarist Robert Fripp, *Fear* captures the renowned English prog wizards (including pianist Richard Barbieri, bassist Colin Edwin, and drummer Gavin Harrison) at their most limber and conceptually relevant.

REVOLVER Was there any specific incident that informed the lyrical themes on *Fear of a Blank Planet*?

STEVEN WILSON There were many things that coalesced at the same time, but the main thing was reading the last Bret Easton Ellis book, [2006's] *Lunar Park*. The central thing is a father's relationship with his son, who is very much the role model for the character in *Fear of a Blank Planet*—this kind of terminally bored kid, anywhere between 10 and 15 years old, who spends all his daylight hours in his bedroom with the curtains closed, playing on his PlayStation, listening to his iPod, texting his friends on his cell phone, looking at hardcore pornography on the Internet, downloading music, films, news, violence... He's also high on prescription drugs. Parents these days seem to deal with their kids' problems not by sitting down and talking to them but by sending them to the doctor and getting them prescription drugs—which is kind of tragic, really.

Is there a message you're trying to get across?

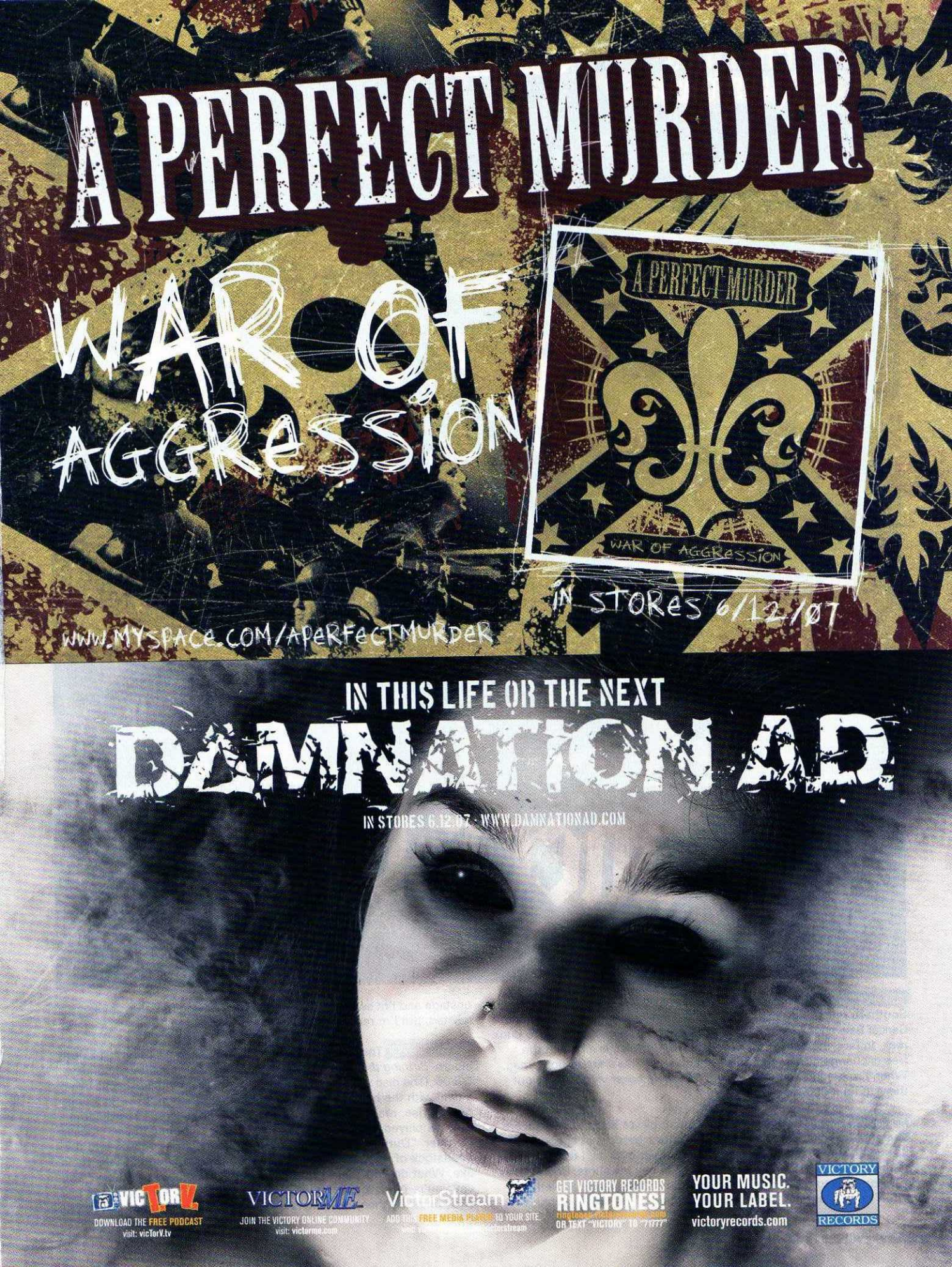
You know, I'm a great believer that rock musicians and pop stars should never try and give a message. I'm definitely one of those people who believe that music and art should be a kind of mirror—it shouldn't be something that preaches at you. In that respect, I feel like I've got a lot more in common with, say, Thom Yorke, than I have with Bono, who wants to tell people how they should think, how they should vote, how they should lead their lives. I've always found that really patronizing.

The title is a reference to Public Enemy's *Fear of a Black Planet*. Were you a fan?

Yeah, I was. That first generation of hip-hop artists was very important to me and the people I was growing up with. There was a real sense back then that the big issue for most young people was race relations. The Rodney King incident was a little later, in the early Nineties, but I remember when I grew up there were a lot of Rock Against Racism shows, Public Enemy and De La Soul were coming out, there were movies like Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing*—and that kind of stuff seemed to address the issues that young people were thinking about. Now they don't seem to be thinking about *anything*—except themselves.

Was it your intention to combine really long songs into a relatively short album, or did it just turn out that way?

It was and it wasn't. I don't set out to write long pieces of music, but at the same time, I don't stop them if they keep growing. With this album, I just wanted to make a really intense piece of music—which is also a reason why the record as a whole is comparatively short. I get really tired of CDs that are filled to the max with 80 minutes of music. As much as I love bands like the Mars Volta and Tool, I can't listen to their albums all the way through in one go. For me, the classic records—[the Beach Boys'] *Pet Sounds*, [the Beatles'] *Revolver*, Nick Drake's *Pink Moon*, [Pink Floyd's] *Dark Side of the Moon*—they're all in that 40-minute pocket. And there's definitely a lesson to be learned there. **J. BENNETT**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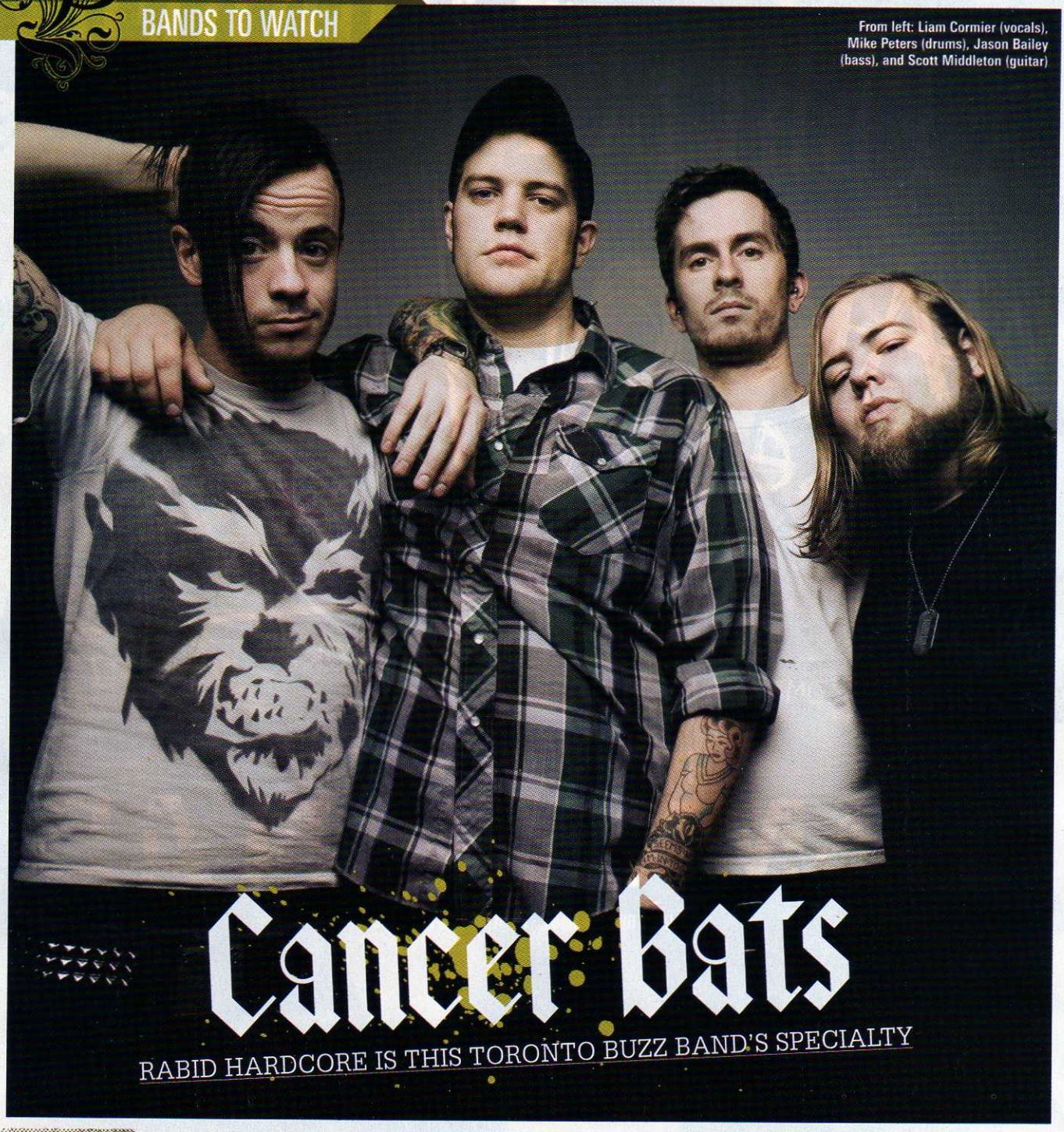

From left: Liam Cormier (vocals), Mike Peters (drums), Jason Bailey (bass), and Scott Middleton (guitar)

Cancer Bats

RABID HARDCORE IS THIS TORONTO BUZZ BAND'S SPECIALTY

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE With a furious sound that mixes concrete-cracking Southern metal with explosive, Black Flag–esque hardcore, Toronto's Cancer Bats bring the pure, adrenaline-pumping aggression back to punk rock. In fact, the band, says vocalist Liam Cormier, is all about the free exchange of raw, unbridled energy: "It's like a street fight, man. When I'm getting ready for a gig, I feel like a boxer who's going out there to fight 300 kids."

HIGH ON HEADBANGING Both Cormier and guitar player Scott Middleton are straightedge, a curious position to be in for a group that encourages its audience to "party super-hard," as Cormier puts it. "I think because of the music we play, guys always want to buy me shots. Rowdy bros will come up to me and go, 'You and me—shots!' and I'll tell them I don't drink, and it'll just blow their minds," he says. "When I'm onstage and I'm sweating and spitting and having fun, they think I'm wasted, but I'm really just dizzy from headbanging."

BLEEDING THROUGH The Cancer Bats originally released their first full-length album, *Birthing the Giant*, through Distort on that most unholy of days, 6/6/06. (The disc went on to generate so much buzz that Abacus inked a deal with the band and rereleased *Giant* last September.) So it was no surprise, really, when chaos ensued. "The day our record came out, we played the basement of this record store in Ottawa," recalls Cormier. "During our third-to-last song, I smashed my face into the headstock of the bass and split my lip wide open. I look at the band like, What do I do? Our drummer says, 'What are you, a pussy? You say you're punk rock? Punk is finishing this set.' So I played the last two songs. By then, I was literally covered in blood." **KEN McINTYRE**

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ZOOM

From left: Seth Hecox (guitar, keyboards), Brent Duckett (drums, vocals), Jason Wisdom (vocals, bass), and Alex Kenis (guitar, vocals)

Becoming the Archetype

GEORGIA BOYS' TECH-DEATHCORE BURNS WITH AN UNFORGETTABLE 'FIRE'

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE Many modern death-metal–cum-metalcore bands wind up just spinning their wheels—and exhausting listeners—in an overzealous pursuit of virtuosity. But the Dacula, Georgia–based Christian tech-deathcore quartet Becoming the Archetype display technical chops while being seriously hooky on their new disc, *The Physics of Fire* (Solid State). "We keep the structure basic enough most of the time," says singer-bassist Jason Wisdom. "There's a lot going on within each riff, but something usually carries its accessibility. Either the vocals are really catchy in a certain part, or the drums will keep a steady beat while the guitar goes wild on a solo."

SOLO-RIFFIC Speaking of solos, every BTA song has at least one. In fact, says Wisdom, "I think a couple have three." That's especially impressive considering that after losing both guitarists since its last disc, 2005's *Terminate Damnation*, the band streamlined down to a four-piece, with guitarist-keyboardist Seth Hecox hitting the six-string extra hard and shredder Alex Kenis (ex-Aletheian, Crutch) joining the lineup. "Listening to the whole record, and paying attention to the solos—they're pretty awesome," says Wisdom.

TELLING IT LIKE THEY SEE IT Wisdom says that both satanists and atheists alike have told him they love Becoming the Archetype's tunes. But for him, having something to say matters just as much as making good music. "The bands that have the most to sing about, whether they are secular or Christian, are always the ones that stand out. It can be a Pantera song encouraging people to stomp the bejesus out of something. You can go from a mission of kicking butt to a mission of preaching for people to get saved," Wisdom says. "Either way, you've got something to sing about." **GREG PRATT**

The Dear & Departed

O.C.-BASED GOTH-PUNKS CHANNEL THEIR PAIN WITH THE HELP OF AN AFI AXMAN

From left: Dan Under (vocals), Joel Bourne (drums), Darren Parkinson (guitar), Simon O'Gorman (guitar), and David Williams (bass)

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE They're based in Orange County, hang out with AFI, and play a painstricken blend of emo, goth, and punk-pop, but there's more to this mopey quintet than meets the eye shadow. First of all, they're not from these parts, hailing instead from New Zealand, Australia, and Wales. And their lyrics, as heard on their debut, *Something Quite Peculiar* (Science), are inspired by experiences far more traumatic than mere breakups. "My best friend's whole family died in a car wreck, and numerous people close to me have committed suicide," frontman Dan Under explains. "These songs come from a place where desperation is all that you know, and trying to get out of that hole is the hardest thing ever."

MADE IN THE JADE Right before the Dear & Departed were set to enter the studio last November, they got bad news: Their producer canceled. Fortunately, the powers of darkness intervened on their behalf. AFI guitarist Jade Puget stepped in to help, and ex–Nine Inch Nails drummer Chris Vrenna took over the production reins. "Someone at our label knew Chris, and it turned out that he had some down time," Under says. "It was a total blessing."

OPEN UP AND SAY OZ Stifled by the lack of opportunity for goth bands in Australia, Under left his homeland in 2003 and moved to California. At first, he was thrown by the cultural differences, and while he has since adjusted to what he describes as the "superficiality of life" in the O.C., he still sometimes gets homesick. "There's a simplicity and honesty to people [in Australia] that you just don't see in California," he says. "And you don't have to wait in three hours of traffic to get 10 blocks away." **JON WIEDERHORN**

THE DEAR & DEPARTED: KEVIN ESTRADA

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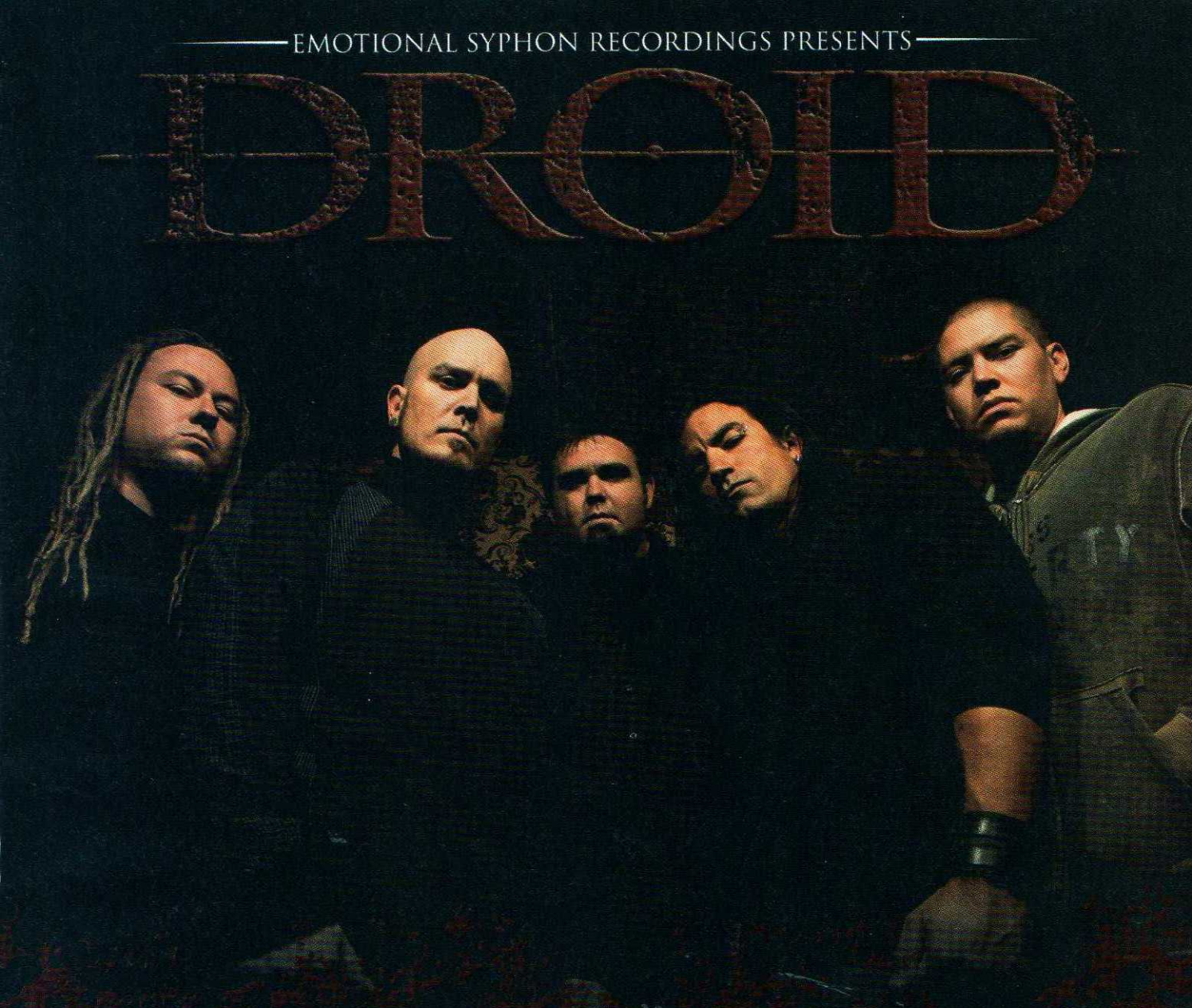

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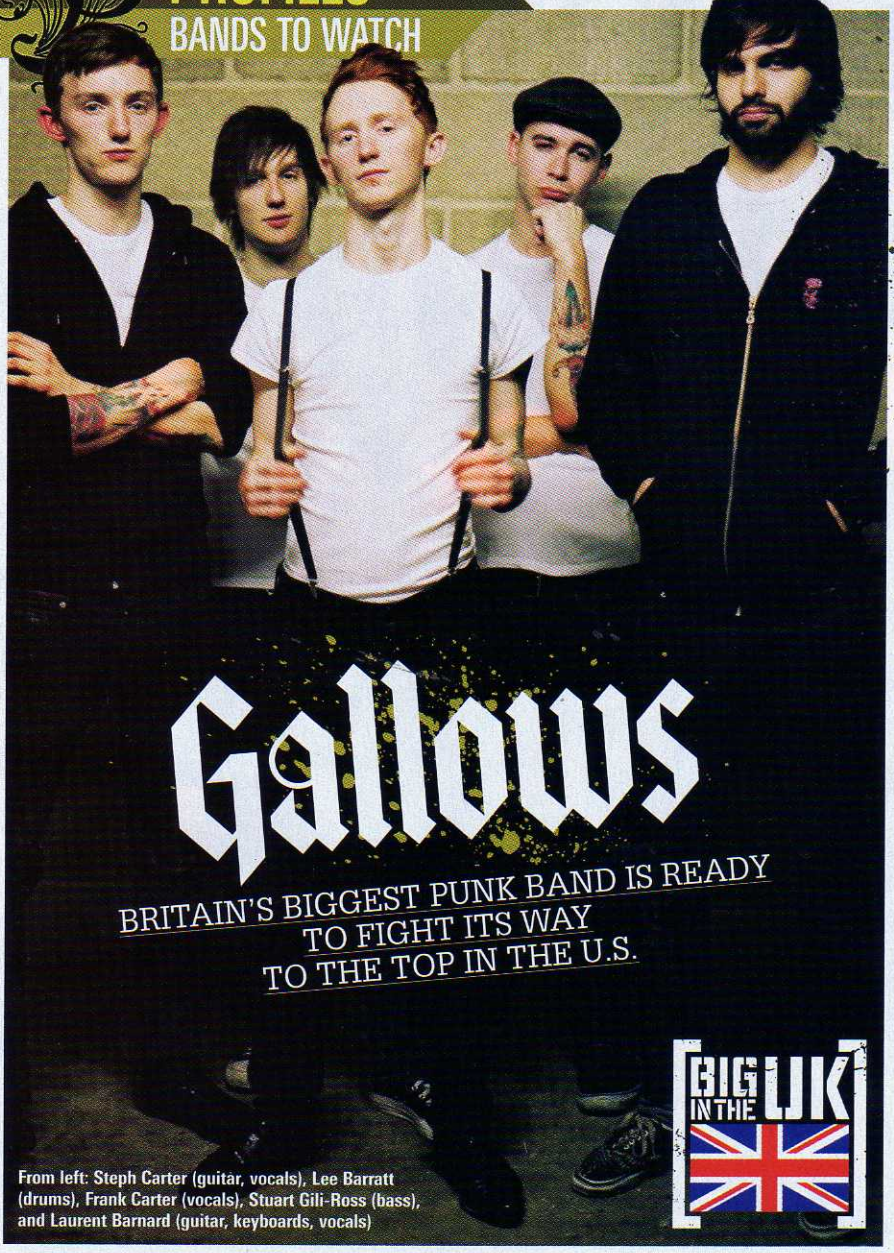


Gallows

BRITAIN'S BIGGEST PUNK BAND IS READY TO FIGHT ITS WAY TO THE TOP IN THE U.S.

BIG IN THE UK

From left: Steph Carter (guitar, vocals), Lee Barratt (drums), Frank Carter (vocals), Stuart Gili-Ross (bass), and Laurent Barnard (guitar, keyboards, vocals)

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE Just as the Sex Pistols and the Clash stoked the ire of disenfranchised music fans around the world in the late Seventies, Gallows—the U.K.'s current reigning punks—mix catchy hardcore songs and confrontational live shows in an effort to wrench today's youth out of their MTV stupors. And yet, though they battle the mass market, the mass market has come calling: Gallows—whose independently released 2006 CD, *Orchestra of Wolves*, marries fist-pumping punk guitars and Murder City Devils–style keys with gritty tales of street violence, divorce, and date rape—recently landed an international deal with Warner Bros. The label's Epitaph imprint will issue the disc stateside on July 10.

AIN'T THAT A KICK In early 2006, when a group of thugs rolled into the band's headlining debut in their hometown of Watford, England, looking for a fight, Gallows' wiry, heavily inked singer, Frank Carter, sicced the crowd on them. "The rude boys got their heads kicked in by 150 kids. After that, we just picked up our instruments and continued playing!" he laughs. Soon, the five pasty Gallows blokes, who used to travel from gig to gig in an old Royal Mail truck, will get to try their luck with U.S. crowds: They're spending this summer on Warped Tour, an opportunity Carter relishes. "I *love* America, " he says. "And to be a part of the Warped traveling circus with bands like Bad Religion—fucking amazing."

HOMELY RUN With their major-label backers and firm resolve, it's no telling how far Gallows will go. Dub them ambitious, crass, or inspiring, but just don't call them pretty. "People are selling music as fashion, and it's just not right," says Carter. "We're a bunch of ugly lads who never pander to anyone's needs. It's all about the music for us, and *that* is the reason everyone's listening." **BRAD ANGLE**

QUICK FIX

Middian

ALBUM

AGE ETERNAL

(METAL BLADE)

SOUND LIKE Mike Scheidt, founding guitarist-vocalist of defunct doomsayers YOB, getting a bigger bong and puffing out some even more epic slo-mo stoner sludge.

FUN FACT Scheidt, known for his death grunts and clean singing in YOB, now leaves the roaring to bassist Will Lindsey. "Doing both is canceling each style out," he says.

THIS HAS BEEN QUICK FIX NO. 139
ONE MORE BAND YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

Lesbians on Ecstasy

ALBUM

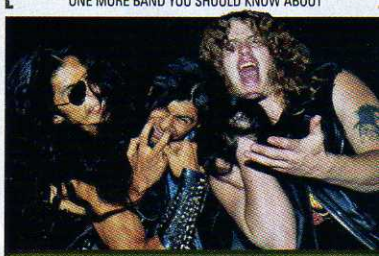
WE KNOW YOU KNOW

(ALIEN8)

SOUND LIKE A fuzzed-up Peaches brandishing a pair of fully loaded Shiny Toy Guns on the streets of Synth City.

FUN FACT On their song "Sedition," the Montreal-based band, whose name is only half ironic, quote none other than Burzum's Varg Vikernes: "Why should I regret seeing the light?"

THIS HAS BEEN QUICK FIX NO. 140
ONE MORE BAND YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT



Merciless Death

ALBUM

EVIL IN THE NIGHT

(HEAVY ARTILLERY)

SOUND LIKE Three Cali kids Possessed by the merciless, undead spirit of Eighties gutter thrash and following its bidding all the way down to their white high-tops.

FUN FACT *Evil*'s awesome Zombie-loving cover art was painted by Megadeth, Nuclear Assault, Municipal Waste, and *Revolver* contributing artist Ed Repka.

THIS HAS BEEN QUICK FIX NO. 141
ONE MORE BAND YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

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INTERVIEWS BY JON WIEDERHORN
PHOTO BY ALETHEA AUSTIN

Cristina Scabbia: no introduction necessary

PHOTO BY ALETHEA AUSTIN

MARTA
BLEEDING THROUGH

HOMETOWN Orange County, California
INSTRUMENT keyboards
WHY SHE'S HOT If jet-black hair and a naughtily placed Heartagram tattoo don't do it for you, you're reading the wrong magazine.

How did people react to your appearance in the "Hottest Chicks in Metal" issue last year?
Positively. I liked the idea of it, and I like the acknowledgment.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
That's not something I take lightly. It's a serious fuck-up. The last time that happened, my band made the guy apologize, and I said, "Someday you're going to get beaten up for opening your mouth and saying ignorant things like that." I'm not a stripper. I'm there to play music.

Do your bandmates get jealous that you get all the attention?
No, they're thankful. It just means more free time for them.

Who's the hottest dude in metal?
Matt [a.k.a. M. Shadows] from Avenged Sevenfold is a good-looking guy.

It's so not a turn-on when a guy...
Farts super-loud. I think it's just disgusting. It's bad manners, and it's not necessary. One guy in my band still seems to think it's really funny to do that.

Are there any metal songs that put you in the mood?
Just about any Danzig song. That's always a good call. It's very raw, sexual music.

CREDITS
(Previous spread) hair: Raina Antle; makeup: Robin Black; styling: Max Smith; vest, pants: Sinner/Saint Menswear, sinner-saint.com; cuff, chain belt, chain bracelet: Seril, seril.net; leather belt, silver bracelet: Ari Stoffer for S.A. Leather, saleather.com; necklace: artist's own; (this spread) hair and makeup: Erin Leigh; styling: Max Smith; bathing suit, garter belt, and stockings: Belle du Jour Vintage & Couture, myspace.com/belledujourvintage

(THIS PAGE) FRANK OPKENFELS; (OPPOSITE PAGE) JUSTIN PALAZZO

AMY LEE
EVANESCENCE

HOMETOWN New York City
INSTRUMENT voice
WHY SHE'S HOT Any woman who can hold her own with Jonathan Davis will surely rock your puny little world.

Is it flattering, annoying, or demeaning to be in an issue about the hottest babes in metal?
It's cool because there aren't that many women out there. And I'm all about having more women in rock, for sure.

What's the secret to remaining hot when you're on the road?
You learn to wear wrinkled clothes and not care.

Do your bandmates get jealous that you get all the attention?
No, they're here to rock. They just want to play their instruments, and they'd rather I do most of the press and the work while they sleep.

Who's the hottest dude in metal?
Chris Cornell. He's got beautiful eyes and an amazing voice.

Who's your favorite metal band and why?
AC/DC. Any song you put on of theirs just makes you want to move, and it's something anyone can relate to because it's good, it's simple, and it rocks.

Are women more faithful on the road than guys?
[*Laughs*] I am. But there are still some funny stories. At an aftershow party, a couple kept talking to us and getting closer and closer, and finally they let us know that they were swingers and they wanted to bring me back to their place. I was totally horrified.

What advice do you have for other women who want to do what you do?
I would say trust yourself. As an artist, you need to trust your own opinion about your art and not listen to what other people think you should do in order to make it.

ELLYLON
ABIGAIL WILLIAMS

HOMETOWN Scottsdale, Arizona
INSTRUMENT keyboards
WHY SHE'S HOT This classically trained vixen can play with men's minds even more skillfully than she can play her synth.

Is it flattering, annoying, or demeaning to be in an issue about the hottest babes in metal?
Of course it's flattering, but I don't think of myself that way, so it's kind of funny in a way. But I'm not complaining.

How do you deal with a lunkhead yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
I completely ignore it. If you're gonna talk to me that way, you don't exist.

What metal songs put you in the mood?
Dimmu Borgir's "In Death's Embrace" because it's truly intense.

Is there something you hear all the time that makes you want to put a screwdriver in your ear?
"You don't look like you should be in a metal band."

What advice do you have for other women who want to do what you do?
Practice your instrument really hard and be on top of your shit, so when people write you off just because you're a chick in metal, you can put them in their place.

GRACE PERRY

LANDMINE MARATHON

HOMETOWN Phoenix
INSTRUMENT voice
WHY SHE'S HOT You know that preppy, popular girl you were crushing on in high school? Now she sings in a death-metal band.

Is it flattering, annoying, or demeaning to be in an issue about the hottest babes in metal?
It's flattering, and it's a chance for me to be able to tell other girls out there that it's OK to be part of an aggressive scene and express yourself in unconventional ways.

Do you foresee a time when there will be so many women in metal that gender won't be an issue?
Yes, I think we're moving toward a place where the scene won't be as male-dominated and no one's gonna look twice if there's a girl in a band.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
The one time that happened, my drummer, who has a man sweater underneath his shirt, took off his shirt and everyone started hooting and hollering. And it was hilarious. That's a far better way to deal with that kind of thing than getting mad.

Who's the hottest dude in metal?
They all look the same to me. The dude in the black shirt with the long hair. Yeah, him.

What's your favorite metal album and why?
Slaughter of the Soul by At the Gates. There's not one bad thing to me on that album.

Are there any metal songs that put you in the mood?
If I want to be in a sentimental mood, throwing on some Bolt Thrower isn't gonna do it for me. I'd rather hear something like Mazzy Star.

Is there something you hear all the time that makes you want to put a screwdriver in your ear?
People referring to me as a gimmick is fucking bullshit because I love this music just as much as the next person, whether or not I have a vagina.

What's the worst thing about being on the road with a bunch of dudes?
On tour, there are a few points where I had a couple mental breakdowns, and they just didn't know what to do. It's hard not having a girl to talk to or somebody who understands you.

LACEY MOSLEY

FLYLEAF

HOMETOWN Temple, Texas
INSTRUMENT voice
WHY SHE'S HOT The challenge of getting closer to this Christian rocker's heart than Jesus has brings out the devil in most men.

Do you foresee a time when there will be so many women in metal that gender won't be an issue?
I don't think it's an issue for me. You go into it not really considering the fact that you're a woman, and that's when people respect you for being a woman.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
I don't say anything. You answer a fool, and you start looking like a fool.

Isn't it unfair that your bandmates can just roll out of bed and get onstage looking like crap and you can't?
I'm still looking for a haircut that I can roll out of bed with and look good. But I'm a performer, and if you don't care about being pretty, the music ends up being just for yourself or for God and not for the fans.

Who's your favorite metal band and why?
Demon Hunter is my favorite because it goes with our message. It's really respectable music.

Is there something you hear all the time that makes you want to put a screwdriver in your ear?
"Oh, you have such a big voice for such a small girl."

KUCSULAIN: ESTER SEGARRA

CANDACE KUCSULAIN

WALLS OF JERICHO

HOMETOWN Detroit
INSTRUMENT voice
WHY SHE'S HOT A wise man once said, "You can always tell the victim of the prowling tigress by the smile on his lifeless face." You have been warned.

Is it flattering, annoying, or demeaning to be in an issue about the hottest babes in metal?
I don't find it demeaning. There aren't that many women in metal, so anything that gives them recognition is good.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
You just immediately make the crowd laugh, instead of getting all mad about it and killing the mood of the show. Recently, someone yelled, "I want to do you," and I said, "Well, yeah, but you're too busy doing your mom."

Isn't it unfair that your bandmates can just roll out of bed and get onstage looking like crap and you can't?
Yeah, I've rolled out of bed and gone right onstage before, and then afterwards I'll read some comment online about it.

Is there something you hear all the time that makes you want to put a screwdriver in your ear?
I always hear, "Oh, you're in Kittie." And I'm like, "Oh, yeah, you're right. I forgot. I got tattoos, and I'm a woman. I must be in Kittie."

JULIE CHRISTMAS

MADE OUT OF BABIES/ BATTLE OF MICE

HOMETOWN Brooklyn, New York
INSTRUMENT voice
WHY SHE'S HOT If you think she goes crazy onstage...

What kind of responses did you get last year when you were in the "Hottest Chicks in Metal" issue?
Some people thought it was cool, and then some feminists asked why I would do something like that.

Do you foresee a time when there will be so many women in metal that gender won't be an issue?
I don't think so. It's not that there aren't any women in metal; I think there are too many men.

What's the secret to remaining hot when you're on the road?
If you were judging by my standards, it would be tons of beer, way too much whiskey, and the occasional fistfight to work it all off. I hate it when my pants get tight, just like the next girl, but I'm too hedonistic to give up anything to look good.

Who's the hottest dude in metal?
Giacometti [the venerable Swiss artist who made sculptures out of metal].

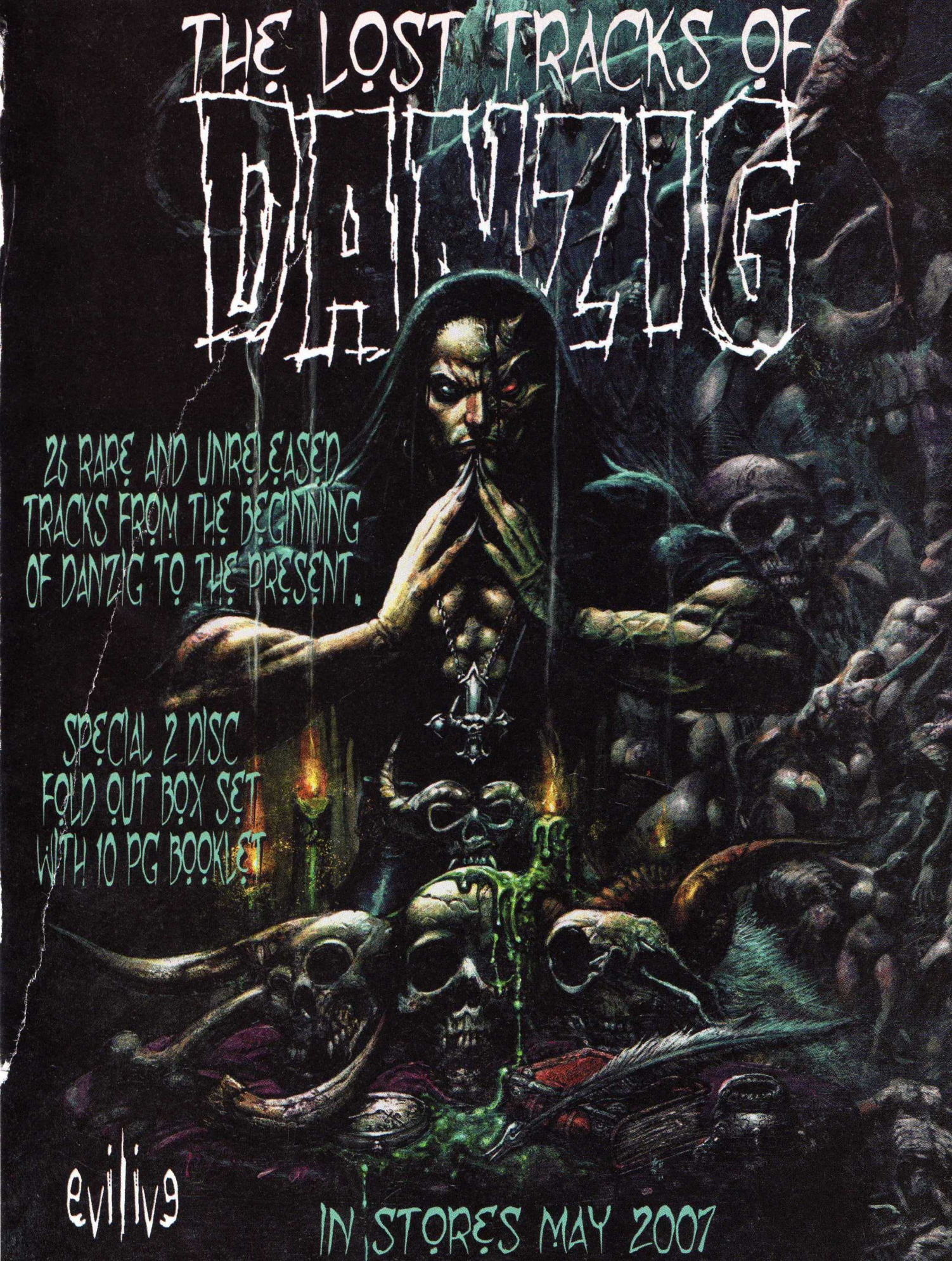
It's so not a turn-on when a guy...
Makes the motion "Call me" and burns his face with a cigarette. That actually happened.

Are there any metal songs that put you in the mood?
No. I like Motown. I'm more of a take-your-panties-off-slowly-and-throw-them-by-the-fire kind of girl.

What advice do you have for other women who want to do what you do?
Don't listen to anyone, and trust your instincts and stay humble.

Do you party as hard as the boys?
I party harder than all of the boys together.

DAMON ALLEN DAVISON; DAMONALLENDAVISON.COM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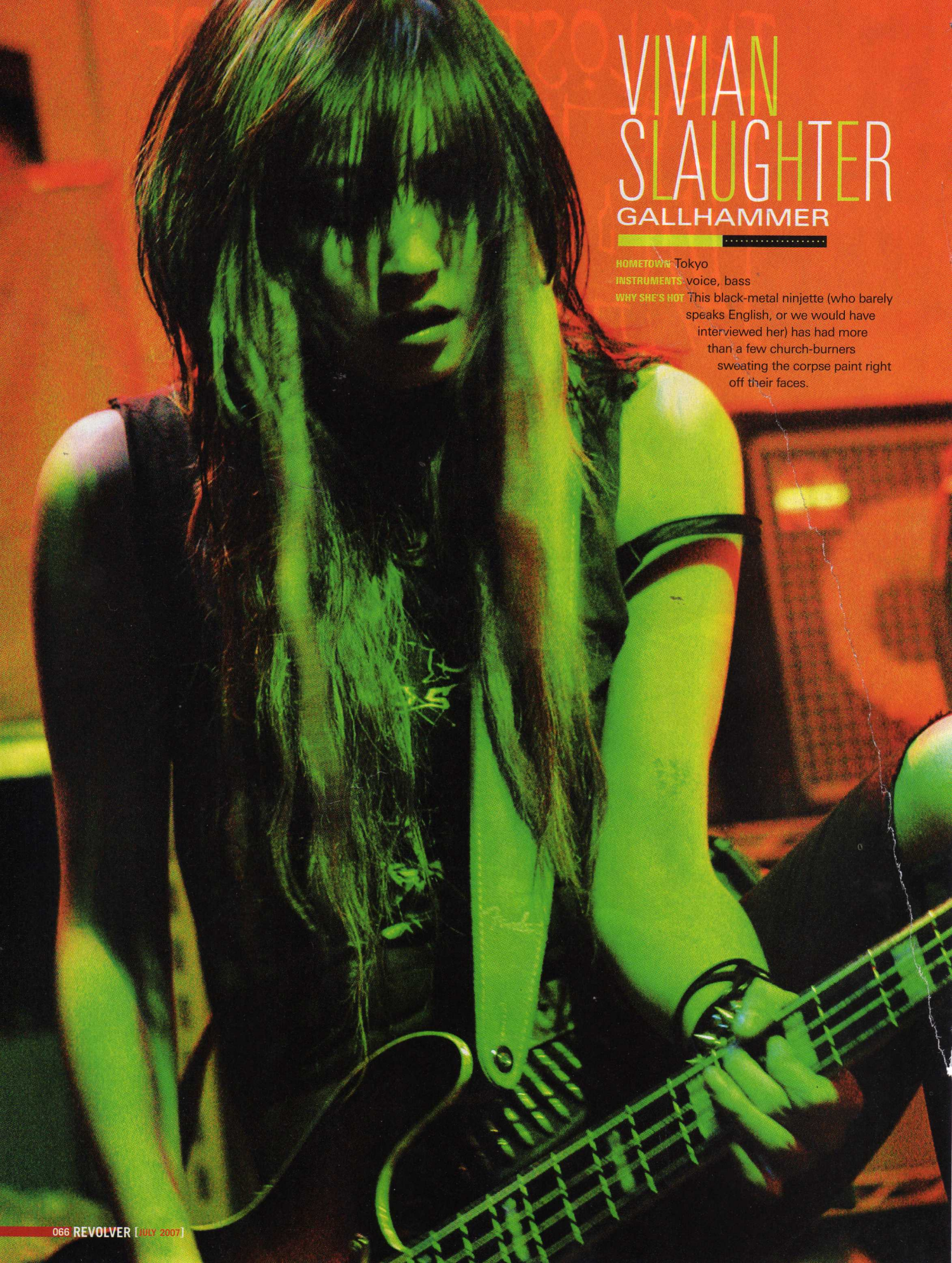

VIVIAN SLAUGHTER
GALLHAMMER

HOMETOWN Tokyo
INSTRUMENTS voice, bass
WHY SHE'S HOT This black-metal ninjette (who barely speaks English, or we would have interviewed her) has had more than a few church-burners sweating the corpse paint right off their faces.

REVOLVER

THE HOTTEST CHICKS IN METAL II

PHOTO BY ALETHEA AUSTIN

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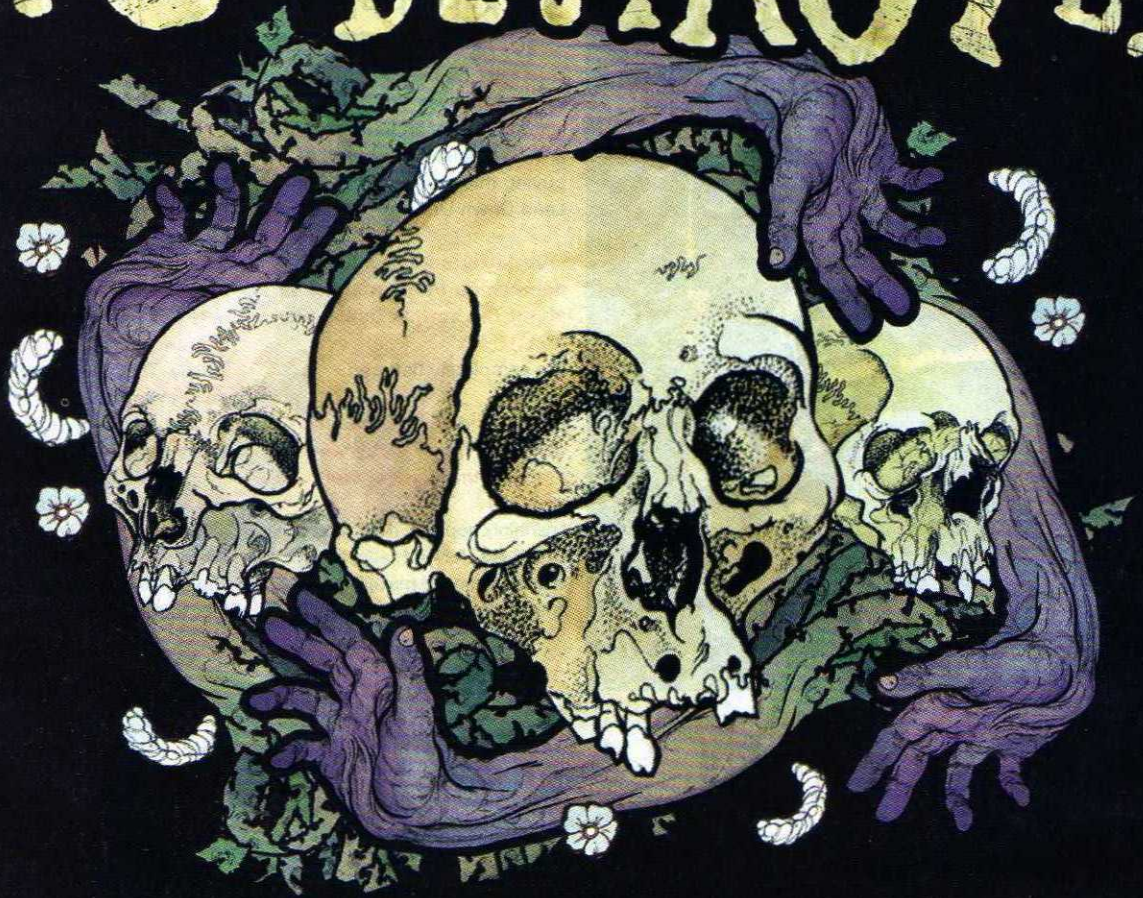

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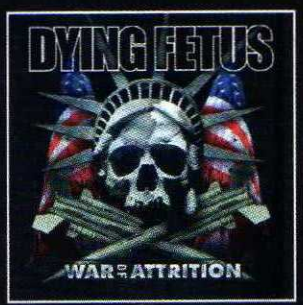

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EMMA ANZAI
SICK PUPPIES

HOMETOWN: Sydney, Australia
INSTRUMENT: bass
WHY SHE'S HOT: Men have been known to kill for the honor of buying this saucy lass from the Land Down Under a frosty lager.

Is it flattering, annoying, or demeaning to be in an issue about the hottest babes in metal?
I'm completely flattered.

Do you foresee a time when there will be so many women in metal that gender won't be an issue?
I certainly hope so. It's a slow build. One thing I haven't seen, though, is an all-girl band make it really big. There's definitely room for that.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
You have to laugh it off. Everyone else is going to view them as being a chauvinist anyway.

Isn't it unfair that your bandmates can just roll out of bed and get onstage looking like crap and you can't?
Totally. The guys in my band don't even have to shave. I have to get up 30 minutes earlier than those guys just to get ready.

What advice do you have for other women who want to do what you do?
Totally disregard any fear of the fact that you're a female.

ALISSA WHITE-GLUZ
THE AGONIST

HOMETOWN Montreal
INSTRUMENT keyboards
WHY SHE'S HOT Having a straightedge girlfriend means that you never have to be the designated driver.

Do you foresee a time when there will be so many women in metal that gender won't be an issue?
With the rise of great bands like Arch Enemy, it becomes less of an issue.

What's the best way to deal with a lunkhead in the crowd yelling, "Show us your tits!"?
I've gotten so much of that, but one of the worst offenders is my drummer. He apologized to me when he auditioned, and he's a great drummer, so it worked out.

Who's the hottest dude in metal?
Alexi Laiho [of Children of Bodom]. But I also have a thing for blonds.

Do your bandmates get jealous that you get all the attention?
Some of them really love the spotlight, so I tell them, "I'll gladly hand you the spotlight," but the thing is, no one wants to shine it there.

It's so not a turn-on when a guy...
Does drugs, drinks, smokes. I find the idea of escapism pathetic.

Is performing onstage a sexual release?
It is. After I get offstage, I'm turned on, even if it's a bad show.

ANZAI: NIGEL STREET

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FACE TIME

SURE, THEY'RE HOT. BUT AS **CRISTINA SCABBIA**, **FRANCINE BOUCHER**, AND **MARIA BRINK** EXPLAIN IN THIS VERY SPECIAL ***REVOLVER*** ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION, CUTE IS NOT WHAT THEY AIM FOR.

BY DAN EPSTEIN | PHOTOS BY ALETHEA AUSTIN

Sofa, so good (from left): Maria Brink, Francine Boucher, and Cristina Scabbia

> "WHEN PEOPLE JUDGE YOU, IT'S BECAUSE THEY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THEMSELVES THAT THEY'RE STRUGGLING WITH."
> —CRISTINA SCABBIA

"I **JUST WANT TO SAY THAT** you're not metal enough," Cristina Scabbia teases *Revolver*, as she flops down onto a dressing-room couch. "I mean, you're doing a *girl* issue," she laughs. "*Eeew*, you're talking to girls!" * The joke, as Lacuna Coil's stunning singer well knows, is that women like herself have long since shattered the myth that female-fronted metal bands "aren't metal enough" and debunked the notion that you can't rock out with the boys while still retaining your feminine identity. Indeed, just as the definition of heavy metal itself has broadened in recent years, so too has the definition of what it means to be a woman in a heavy-metal band.

Take the trio of girls in this very special roundtable, for example. Scabbia is a chic Italian from Milan, whose dulcet tones pair with male singer Andrea Ferro's feral growl to give Lacuna Coil their distinctive "beauty and the beast" vocal sound, as heard on such swirling goth-pop-metal hits as "Heaven's a Lie" and "Our Truth." Maria Brink is a rough-and-tumble chick from upstate New York whose powerful roar—as showcased on In This Moment's debut, *Beautiful Tragedy* (Century Media)—could shame Lamb of God's Randy Blythe. And Francine Boucher is a budding soundtrack composer from Quebec whose ethereal vocals contrast intriguingly with the churning thrash riffs on Echoes of Eternity's debut, *The Forgotten Goddess* (Nuclear Blast).

They're three beautiful, talented, charismatic, and driven women who take remarkably disparate approaches to their music. And if being locked in a dressing room with them for half an hour somehow renders *Revolver* vulnerable to accusations of being "not metal enough," we're frankly willing to take that risk.

STYLING BY MAX SMITH. CRISTINA SCABBIA'S MAKEUP BY ROBIN BLACK. FRANCINE BOUCHER'S AND MARIA BRINK'S MAKEUP BY ERIN LEIGH. HAIR BY RAINA ANTLE.

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) BRINK'S SHIRT, BELT, JEANS: ARTIST'S OWN; BOOTS: BELLE DU JOUR VINTAGE & COUTURE, MYSPACE.COM/BELLEDUJOURVINTAGE; BOUCHER'S TOP: BORDEAUX; BOOTS: ARTIST'S OWN; SCABBIA'S DRESS: JUNKER, JUNKERDESIGNS.COM; JEWELRY: PNUT, PNUTJEWELRY.COM; (THIS PAGE) VEST, PANTS: SINNER/SAINT MENSWEAR, SINNER-SAINT.COM; CUFF, CHAIN BELT, CHAIN BRACELET: SERIL, SERIL.NET; LEATHER BELT, SILVER BRACELET: ARI STOFFER FOR S.A. LEATHER, SALEATHER.COM; NECKLACE: ARTIST'S OWN

> "I'M INSPIRED TO DO SOMETHING WITH MY LIFE AND NOT JUST STAY AT HOME AND HAVE CHILDREN."
> — FRANCINE BOUCHER

What was the turning point in each of your lives that made you decide, "I'm going to make my mark singing in a band"?

FRANCINE BOUCHER I've loved metal since early high school, but my voice is very soft, so I never thought I could be in a metal band. But nowadays, metal has expanded so much. The guys in my band come from a death-metal and thrash background, and they wanted to see what it was like with softer vocals. I was like, "Hell, yeah—I'm all about it!"

CRISTINA SCABBIA I always loved to sing, but I never thought about having a career as a singer or being in a band at all—especially a metal band. The closest thing to metal that I ever heard in our house was AC/DC and Led Zeppelin. It wasn't until I was about 19 years old and I started to hang out at this club that just played metal music that I really got hooked up with metal. I loved it, but I didn't think about being in a band until I met our singer [Andrea Ferro] and bass player [Marco Coti Zelati]. They already had a band, and they asked me to sing some choruses on their demo tape. They liked what I did, and they asked me to stay.

MARIA BRINK All I ever wanted to do was be a singer, ever since I was a little girl. I grew up with a stoner hippie mom who was into Patti Smith, Zeppelin, Pink Floyd. I was rocking out at, like, 3 years old, dancing on pool tables at camp, things like that. The big plunge was about six years ago. I really wanted to go for it, so I moved from New York to L.A., just to find a band.

BRINK'S JEANS, TOP, BELT: ARTIST'S OWN; BOOTS: BELLE DU JOUR VINTAGE & COUTURE; BOUCHER'S TOP: SPICE AND ROSES BY SPY; JEANS, BRACELETS: ARTIST'S OWN

Were there any women rockers you particularly looked up to?

SCABBIA I always liked Madonna because of her way of transforming herself, her way of being so confident with herself, and how she doesn't care at all what people think about her. That's really inspired me in life, and especially in this business, where there's always someone ready to throw shit on you. I don't care anymore. I just look at them like, Hey, I'm onstage, playing. I could give a fuck what you think. But in the beginning, it hurt me, in a sense. I was like, These people don't even know me—why do they have to judge me? Then I just realized that some people have nothing else to do, and when they judge you it's because they have a problem with themselves that they're struggling with. So I think Madonna inspired me to say, OK, look ahead, go for your goals, and don't care about the rest.

BRINK I really like Madonna, too, for the same reasons Cristina said. But when I was younger, I was also inspired by Janis Joplin and Stevie Nicks.

> "WHEN I'M ONSTAGE . . . I'M DEFINITELY NOT THINKING, DO I LOOK REALLY HOT RIGHT NOW?"
> — MARIA BRINK

BOUCHER I don't have one favorite in particular. I'm just inspired to do something with my life and not just stay at home and have children. I want to live an adventure, and I love music, so I'm gonna go for it.

If you could trade your voice with anyone, male or female, for one day, who would it be?

BOUCHER It's so hard to say, because I fall in love with all of them. I've always loved Bruce Dickinson of Iron Maiden. I think he's an amazing frontperson, and I think Geoff Tate of Queensrÿche is, too. Female? It's hard to pick one.

SCABBIA About females, I can't give you one name in particular, but definitely black soul singers. That's what inspired me in my singing—not caring about being too perfect, but caring about giving your heart out when you sing. About males, I would say Mike Patton [of Faith No More/Mr. Bungle fame], because he can do anything—he can sing, he can scream—and he has an awesome voice. I know some producers who have recorded with him, and they told me that he never gets tired. He can scream all day and still sing in perfect pitch.

BRINK Chino Moreno [of the Deftones] is my favorite guy singer, and I love Sarah McLachlan—she has a beautiful voice.

SCABBIA Oh, yeah! I love her!

What about nonmusical influences—things that inform your lyrics or your general philosophy about what you do?

BOUCHER I'm very spiritual. I'm not

Once, twice, three times a lady

religious. I'm not affiliated with any religion in particular, but I do like to pick my favorite parts of each of them and incorporate them into our lyrics. Our guitarist and I write the lyrics, and our view is that our souls are immortal, that they can never die, and we're just passing through. We have a song called "Expressions of Flesh," which is about how we're just that—we're just vessels.

SCABBIA We're just inspired by life in general. And we're inspired by our music, as well. Me and Andrea write the lyrics together, and we never write lyrics before the music is done. It's surprising, because we are two different persons, male and female, but we always agree on vocal lines and lyrics. There is no ego in the band.

BRINK I write all our lyrics. For the songs on our album, I kind of dug backward. Some of it is really painful, about things that I've gone through, but I just wanted to make the songs real and filled with emotion. I never screamed in a band before. I was never like, I wanna scream like the boys and be a tough girl. But it was kind of like I had so much built up, and I really just wanted to let it out.

Do you feel any pressure or desire to be a role model?

BOUCHER I don't particularly want to be a role model, but I hope that [fans] can see my spirit for never giving up and take away the message that you should always do what you want to do in life.

SCABBIA I wouldn't like people copying me. But I would love for them to look at me as an example. I see myself as a completely regular girl. I'm not super-beautiful, I'm not super-intelligent, I didn't finish the university. But I'm so perfect for what I am, because I learned to work on myself, to work on my image, and to work on my skills. So it's important to me that people understand that they don't have to copy people, but they all have talents that they have to find out about.

BRINK I don't know. I'm *so* not perfect—not that anybody's perfect. And being a role model is kind of scary. I guess I just want to bring a good energy, a good influence. But there was something about me in [the May 2007 issue of] *Revolver* that I wanted to clear up: I was talking about things that I've been through and said that drug addiction was one of them. There was drug addiction in my family, but *I've never done drugs, ever, which is* something I'm very proud of. Because when you're growing up, and there's all kinds of things around you...

SCABBIA I grew up in a part of Milan that was kind of a bad area. It's not anymore, but there were a lot of drug dealers, a lot of mafia guys in that area. I never did anything. I'm not judging it, but I was just never interested. I've never been attracted to drugs at all, really. Plus, I'm like a Tasmanian devil already, so to think about me doing something like coke, I would probably run all day. [*Laughs*] But I do drink. [*Laughs*]

BRINK Yeah, me too, sometimes.

BOUCHER I was very curious when I was younger. I smoked cigarettes for a long time. I smoked weed, I did coke, but it was more because I wanted to know what it was like. I don't have an addictive personality, and I've realized that I don't really need it in my life, and it kind of brings me down. But at the time, I had fun. I was experimenting—why not?

As the lone women in your bands, have you ever felt any pressure to play up the "sexy" angle?

BOUCHER With my band? No. I think it's OK to be sexy, as long as it's something you're comfortable with. I'm happy to be a woman.

SCABBIA With me, there is a big difference between who I am in photo sessions and who I am onstage. Onstage, I would never wear high heels, but I like to experiment in the pictures. I'm really proud to be a female, and just because I play with a bunch of guys, it's not like I have to become a man, as well!

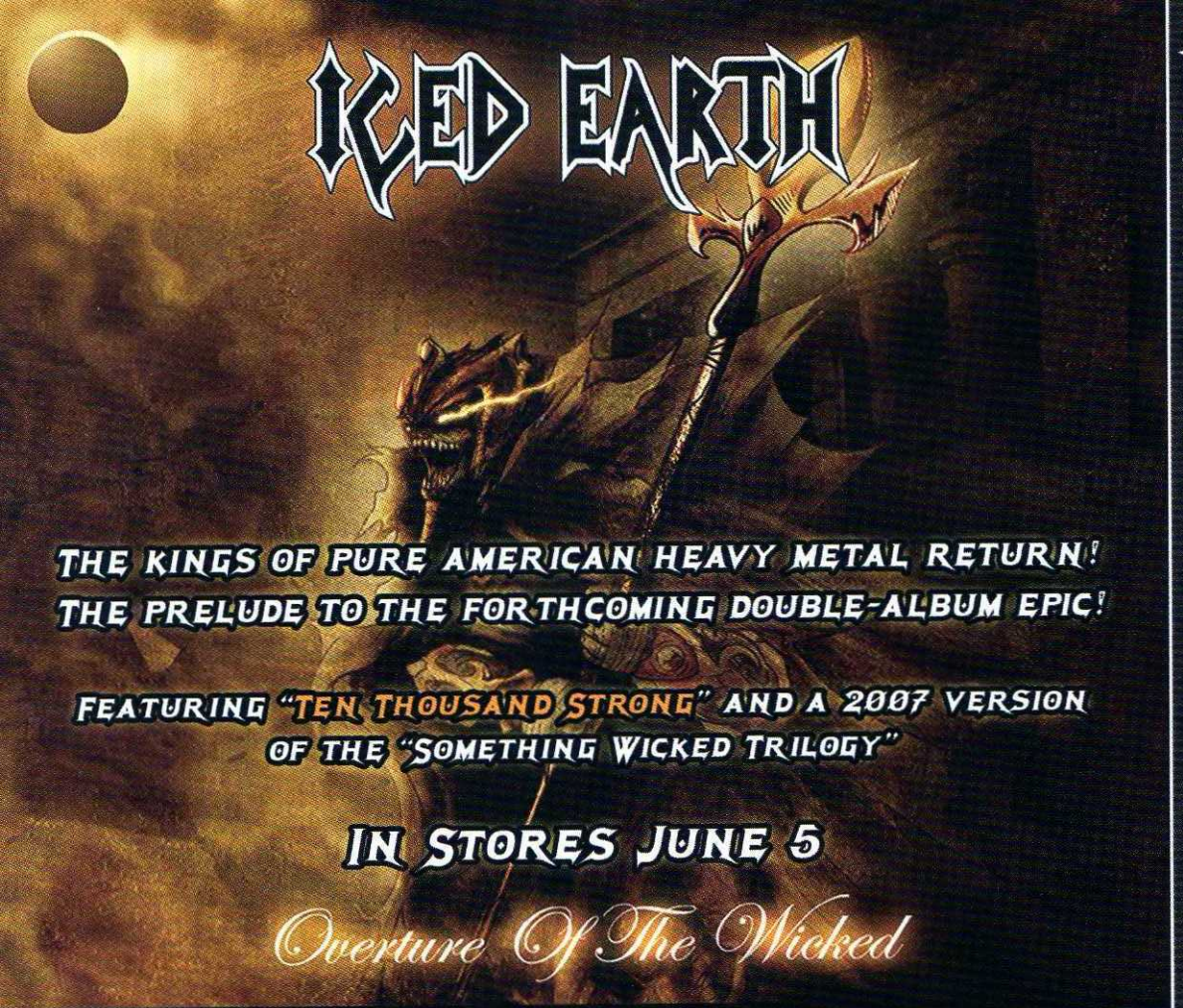
BRINK For me, when I'm onstage, it's like a whole different reality. You're belting it out, you're emotional—it's this whole other place I'm in, a whole dream world. You're definitely not thinking, Do I look really hot right now? [*Laughs*]

SCABBIA Onstage, I wear comfortable shoes, and most of the time I wear pants. I like to move, I like to headbang. I tried in the past to wear a cool dress that I'd worn in a photo session, but it was like, Fuck, I can't do anything except stand like a mannequin! [*Laughs*]

BRINK I like wearing crinoline skirts onstage that pouf out, so you can still run around in them. It's not like something tight...

SCABBIA [*Mock horror*] Oh, god, now we're talking about clothes! The guys who are reading this will be *like, "Ugh..." Maybe we should be* talking about cars!

BOUCHER'S TOP: STORK; BELT, CUFF: SERIAL; JEANS, BOOTS: ARTIST'S OWN; SCABBIA'S VEST, BELT: JUNKER; PANTS: CASTLE STARR; NECKLACE: PNUT; BOOTS: ARTIST'S OWN



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Rebel MEETS Rebel

interviews

LIGHT THIS CITY'S LEAD SCREAMER GOES NOTE FOR NOTE WITH ARCH ENEMY'S LEATHER-THROATED FRONTWOMAN

LAURA NICHOL

ANGELA GOSSOW

IT'S A FEW MINUTES BEFORE Light This City singer Laura Nichol picks up the phone to talk to Arch Enemy vocalist Angela Gossow, and she can hardly contain her nervousness. Gossow was one of Nichol's biggest inspirations growing up, but that isn't the main reason for her jitters. Last year, when *Revolver* put together its inaugural "Hottest Chicks in Metal" issue, Nichol talked about not wanting to be compared to Gossow, and she's afraid the German-born singer might have taken it the wrong way.

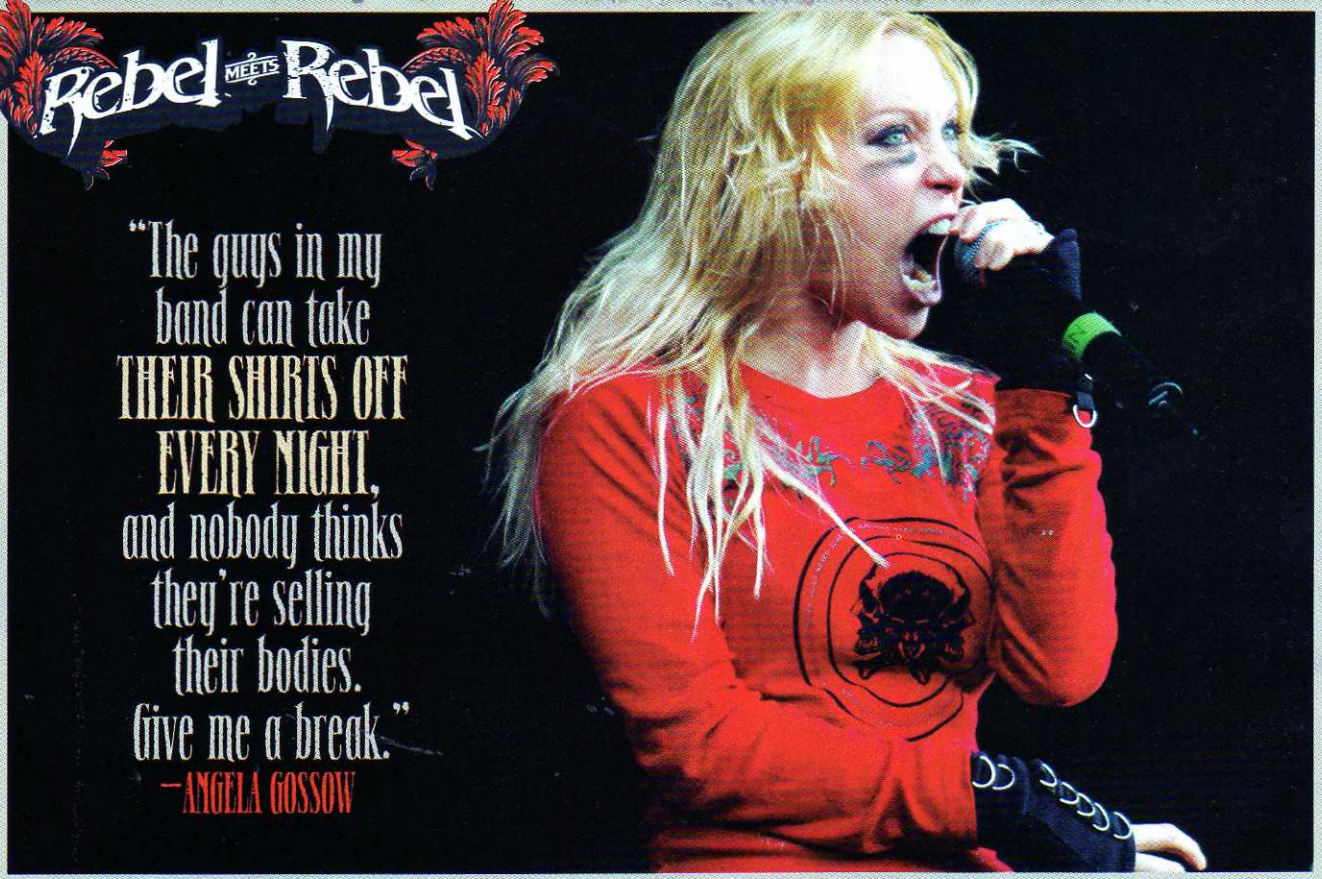
"I love your voice and totally respect what you're doing as a musician, and people ask me about you all the time," Nichol explains to Gossow soon after the two connect. "What I meant to say in the article was that I think you and I have completely different voices, and you don't hear people comparing singers with different voices unless they're women."

There's no need for Nichol to defend herself. "I totally understood that," Gossow replies in thickly accented English. "I mean, you wouldn't compare [Carcass singer] Jeff Walker to [Morbid Angel's] David Vincent, but I get compared all the time to women singers, so I understand your frustration."

It's not just their voices that make these two women different from each other. Gossow is 12 years older than Nichol, and she's reached a higher

BY JON WIEDERHORN | ILLUSTRATION BY EGRART.COM

Rebel Meets Rebel



"The guys in my band can take THEIR SHIRTS OFF EVERY NIGHT, and nobody thinks they're selling their bodies. Give me a break."
—ANGELA GOSSOW

level of popularity. She's sung on four records, compared with Nichol's two, and she's toured the world numerous times, whereas Light This City have yet to leave North America. But both performers see eye to eye about lots of things: their roles as frontwomen, their desire to have children, and the joys and hazards of touring. Gossow is even a Light This City fan.

"The first time I heard of you was in that *Revolver* issue," she tells Nichol. "I thought, Oh, that's cool. Another band that dares to have a female singer in this kind of music. I think you sound really good. And you're really young, so I think you have a good long run ahead of you."

With the mutual admiration taken care of, the two begin talking about everything from media exploitation to naked Swedes to drunken misadventures involving lap dances and table handstands.

LAURA NICHOL When I was a kid, I wanted to be a volcanologist. What did you want to be when you were little, and when did you realize you wanted to be a frontwoman?
ANGELA GOSSOW I wanted to be a nurse. I actually worked for a year in a senior home with people who were terminally ill. I never planned to tour the world in a band. Northern European people are small thinkers. I just thought it would be cool to be in a band and get in a van and play three shows over a weekend, but that's about it.
NICHOL How did you end up joining Arch Enemy?
GOSSOW I started writing for a metal magazine, and I'd pass demo tapes [for the band I was in at the time] to bands I interviewed. I thought, Wow, it would be cool if we could support [those bands] the next time they played here. And that's how I got the job in Arch Enemy, basically.
NICHOL Was it a major adjustment for you?
GOSSOW Yes, because I started touring at a late age. I was 26, and before that, I was used to the good German life. You work, you have a good wage, your apartment, and a car. It's a very common, boring life, but you get used to it, so when you get on tour, it disrupts all your routines. In the beginning, I felt so insecure being out there really far from home.
NICHOL It took me a while to get used to being on the road. At first, I had panic attacks, but I found out that the touring lifestyle actually helps me because you're forced to go with the flow and take things as they come.
GOSSOW The good thing about touring is it takes away worries about anything else. Being on the road is all you think about, and you arrange everything around that. That's good for me because I usually worry a lot about everything.
NICHOL Some of my best tour stories are about the really gross houses we've stayed at. Can you describe the most disgusting places you've seen on tour?
GOSSOW We played a place that had a shower in the basement that was just a big hole covered in mold. I hadn't showered for three days, so I went in and the water comes out, and it's warm and I'm happy. Then I look up at the ceiling and it's covered black with cockroaches, and they start to fall. I usually take an hour in the bathroom, but I got dressed in 10 seconds.
NICHOL We haven't done a bus tour yet. Mostly, we stay at our friends' houses. Recently, we were in L.A. at a fan's house, and as soon as the door was opened, there was this stench of smoke and cat piss and garbage. There were three-day-old dog turds on the carpet, and the mom of the house had a black eye. I just got the hell out of there.
GOSSOW How do people live like that? I would just want to kill myself.
NICHOL You guys get to avoid that because you stay on the bus.
GOSSOW The problem with the bus is it's so expensive, you can't afford a day room. And that means a lot of the time, we can't shower. Being a woman in a band is tough because you try to maintain your looks a bit. People want you to be that hot chick from that band. And it's like, Well, right now I'm not really hot. I'm sweaty and greasy. Sometimes I wish I was a guy because nobody cares how they look.
NICHOL Totally. In the metal scene, women are portrayed differently, and there's a different kind of expectation. What do you think the feminine ideal is in the metal scene?
GOSSOW I think every woman's different and has the right to be. A lot of times it's not the woman who wants to portray herself as the sex object or the gimmick. But the media wants that, and they ask you all these funny questions that don't

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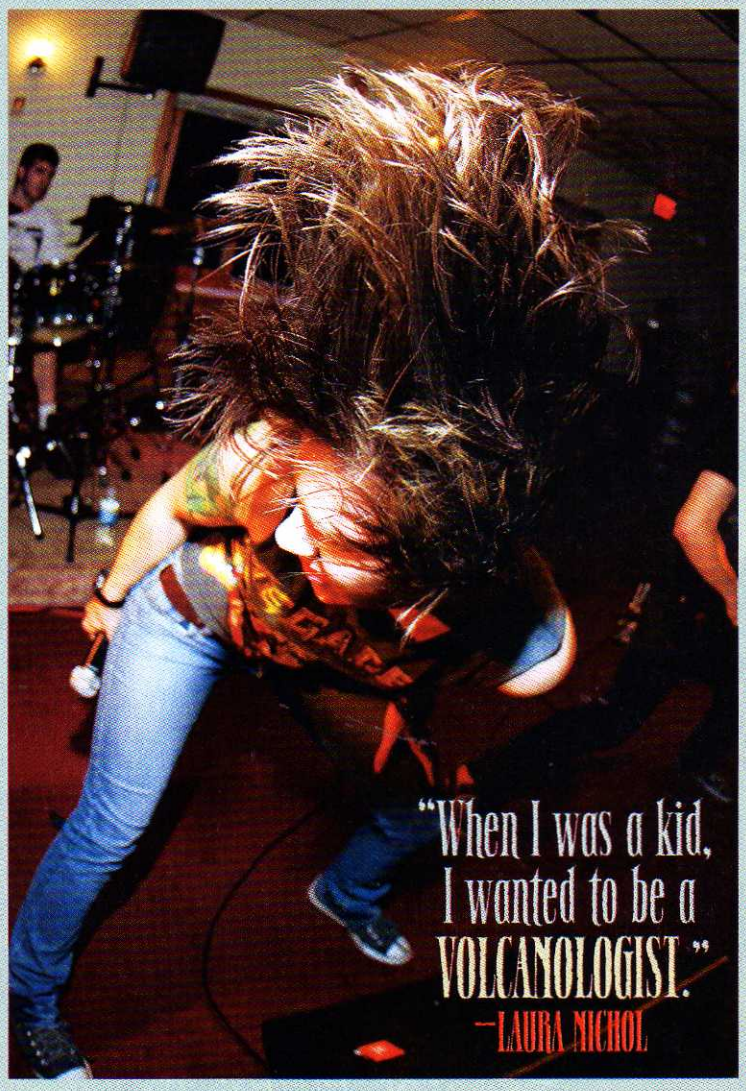


have anything to do with the band. I've been approached so many times by editors who go, "Yeah, we want you for an exclusive feature, and we really want to talk about your sex life." And I'm like, "OK. No, thank you." And guess what? They don't do a story at all.

NICHOL Oh, man, that sucks.

GOSSOW The media pushes you into that position if you're female. They say, "Yeah, we want some hot pictures of you. We're running the Hottest Women of the Year issue," like *Revolver* did last year. And I have to say, I didn't want to be in that because I thought it was the wrong idea for me. And they put a picture of me in there anyway with some quote. I'm sure the guy [who did the story] is listening right now. I know that you were in there as well.

NICHOL Yeah, I thought it would be cool to have some fun with it. People might have thought I was using it as a gimmick, but I wore my Carcass shirt and I saw it for what it was.

GOSSOW That's cool, and for women who choose to be a sex symbol, it's totally fine because I think that's what makes a strong woman. A strong woman has a choice, and if she wants to put her tits out and show her ass, so be it. But if she gets pushed into it, that's when she loses her choice and gets degraded. I have pictures where I'm standing there with military pants, big boots, and a Morbid Angel T-shirt. And that should be seen as being as cool as me standing there in high heels and really tight pants. Nobody has the right to judge me. I'm not a feminist; I'm just a woman who does what she wants. And the guys in my band can take their shirts off every night, and nobody thinks they're selling their bodies. Give me a break.

NICHOL You've said that you want to eventually settle down and have a family, and that's definitely a dream of mine. How do you see that affecting your music career?

GOSSOW The guys in the band have children, and it's only possible because they have women sitting at home with the children. I think if you're a woman in a band and you have a kid, it means you tour very little. And that means I'm going to be a very old mother because I want to tour for a long time. But I do want to have kids. I think people get really egocentric and boring when they're old and don't have children. They've just been thinking about themselves for their whole life.

NICHOL I can't imagine not touring, but I want to have kids, too. I have these two parts of me that are totally contradictory. I love touring in this band, but I'm really family oriented.

GOSSOW Yes, I have three siblings. I'm used to a lot of kids, basically. But how old are you now?

NICHOL I'm 20.

GOSSOW Twenty! Look, you have lots of time. You don't even have to think about that now. I'm 12 years older than you. My clock is ticking. Every time my mother sees me, she says, "Tick tock." But I think with most people, it just happens. One day, the condom gets lost, and you're just pregnant and you have to fucking deal with it. And it's usually, when the condom falls off, he had a really small dick, and you don't really want to get stuck with this guy for the rest of your life.

NICHOL Oh, man. I'm totally blushing right now. [*Nervous giggle. Long pause.*] Ummm, what do you do to wind down from touring when you're home?

GOSSOW Within 24 hours, I'm the old Angela who takes care of other people and washes clothes and cooks food and gets updated by her mom about everybody else's life.

NICHOL Even though you're from Germany, Arch Enemy is seen as a Swedish band. And my band has been hugely influenced by bands from Gothenburg. How do you feel about the scene there now compared to the golden age with bands like In Flames, At the Gates, and Dark Tranquillity?

GOSSOW Some of the bands there have changed musically, but some of them are the same. But mentally, nobody has changed. They're very friendly, very Swedish, very calm. I like to give them a big-ass drink, and then they get totally crazy. They usually like to get naked after a few drinks and slap their asses in public. I don't know what this is about, but I've seen it so many times.

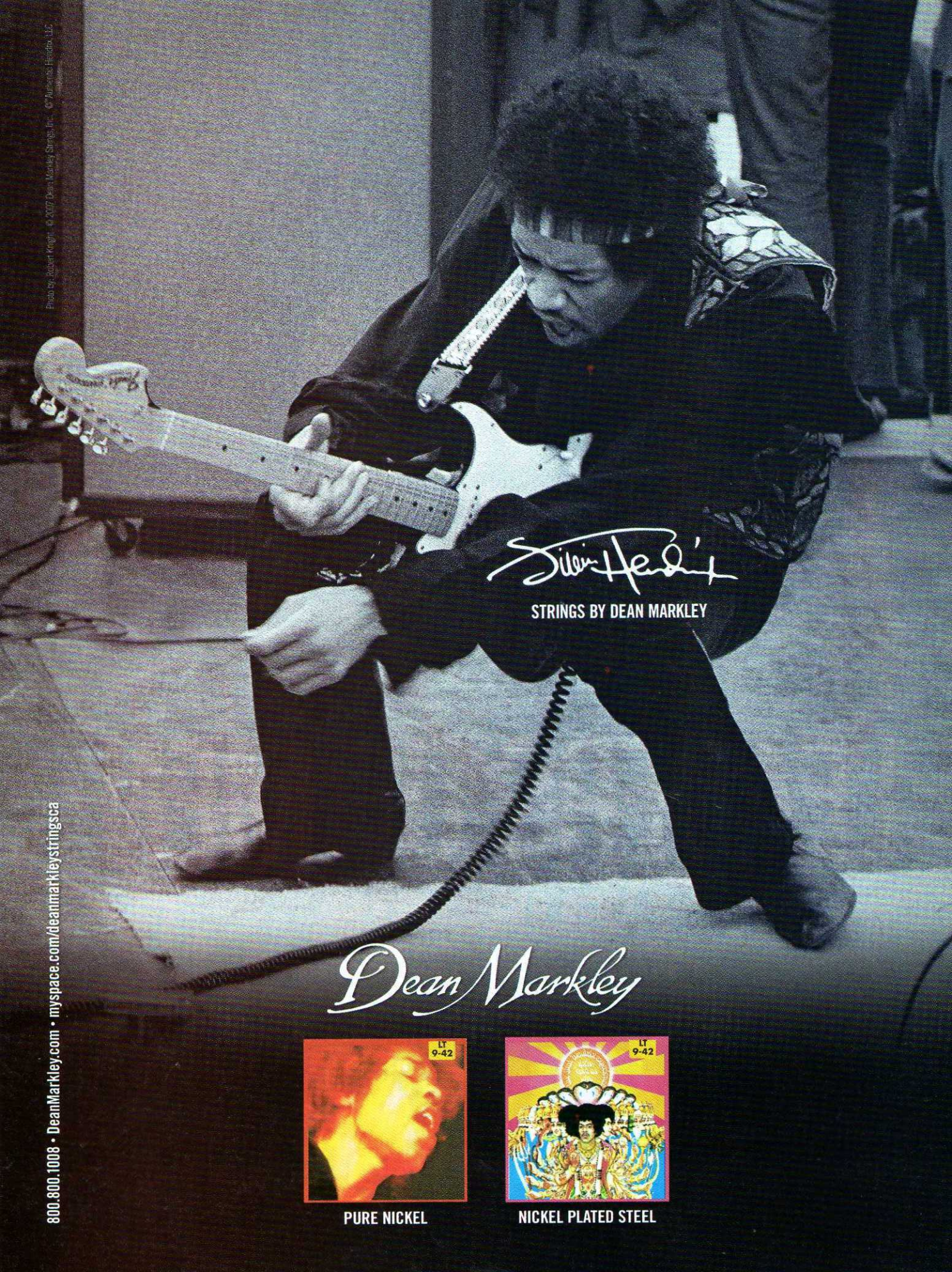
NICHOL We just went to [Vinnie Paul's strip club] the Clubhouse in Dallas, and all the guys on tour bought me a couple lap dances. It was just a crazy, fun time. Do you party it up with your bandmates also?

GOSSOW I'm not allowed to party anymore because when I'm really drunk, I do things I wouldn't normally do, and the next day people are putting videos on MySpace of me doing handstands on the table in a short skirt, and I don't even know if I had panties on. Drinking brings out the evil Angela. On the Jägermeister tour, [Slayer's] Kerry King and [Hatebreed's] Jamey Jasta were chasing me with Jäger every day because they'd heard about me and wanted to see that. Also, when I drink, it fucks me up the next day and I can't perform properly.

NICHOL I agree. Once in a while, it's fun, but it's hard playing with a hangover.

GOSSOW We did Gigantour, and our guitar player Fredrik Åkesson got so drunk he passed out behind Megadeth's tour bus. If nobody had found him, they would have backed right over him. So drinking too much can actually be dangerous. You must always be able to walk. That's the rule in our band. If you can't walk anymore, get in your bunk and shut the fuck up.

KAOEN JERZYK / THEMETALUNION.COM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From left: Scott Kelly, Steve Von Till, Josh Graham (the band's visual artist), Noah Landis, Jason Roeder, and Dave Edwardson

LEADERS OF MEN

OVER THE PAST 22 YEARS, SPIRITUAL-METAL TITANS NEUROSIS HAVE WON AN ALMOST RELIGIOUS FOLLOWING BY STEADFASTLY REFUSING TO COMPROMISE THEIR CREATIVE VISION AND DIY ETHOS. AND, AS THEIR EARTH-SHATTERING NEW ALBUM PROVES, THEY'RE NOT ABOUT TO MELLOW OUT ANYTIME SOON.

BY BRANDON GEIST

IF THERE WERE A GUINNESS WORLD Record for longest sustained metal scream, Neurosis singer-guitarist Scott Kelly would have a lock on it. At the climax of the song "To the Wind," off his band's cataclysmic new full-length, *Given to the Rising*, he roars out the title phrase and holds the last word for a jaw-dropping, vein-bulging 29 seconds. He's still not sure how he pulled it off. ✣ "I don't even know where that came from," he says with a chuckle, pausing to mull it over. "Something just broke loose. I saw my life pass before my eyes. I'm not even kidding, man. It took me about three or four minutes to recover."

Cofrontman Steve Von Till, who was looking on, thunderstruck, from the studio control room while Kelly let out his primal scream, has his own theory—and a rather mystical one at that. "It's one of those things. When you commit yourself to music like this, you have to embody the spirit of it, and you have to open your physical being to having it flow right up through the center of the earth, and up through your spinal cord, and up out your head," he says. "It's actually disappointing if you don't reach a state where you are no longer conscious of what you are doing. That's some sort of magical experience that we've discovered through music. It's some kind of full-on meditation."

It doesn't take long to figure out that Neurosis take their craft a hell of a lot more seriously than your average bunch of metal or hardcore mosh-starters. As Kelly puts it, "Music is my religion," and his bandmates would likely say the same. Since their formation in 1985, through

"IF YOU'RE A TRULY SELF-REFLECTIVE PERSON, THEN OCCASIONALLY YOU TAKE YOURSELF THROUGH THE WINTER OF THE SOUL."
—STEVE VON TILL

stints on the first two Ozzfests and opening for Pantera, Neurosis have been spreading their faith to a fervent cult following. Their epic, post-metal sound echoes resoundingly in the music of Mastodon, Isis, Gojira, and a gazillion other bands, while everyone from Lamb of God's Mark Morton to Fear Factory's Burton C. Bell to Hatebreed's Sean Martin proudly pose for photos in their Neurosis T-shirts. The band rarely plays live anymore, which has only added to its mystique, as have the members' almost ascetic refusal to compromise their vision and devout abidance to the DIY ethos. (Neurosis manage themselves, book their own shows, and release their own records on their label, Neurot.) Sticking to their principles has come with a price—all the bandmates have to work full-time day jobs to pay the bills—but it has also taken them to *Given to the Rising*, Neurosis' darkest, heaviest, and greatest album in almost a decade, and one that promises to convert many new disciples.

Written across three states (Kelly lives in Oregon and Von Till in Idaho, while bassist Dave Edwardson, drummer Jason Roeder, and keyboardist Noah Landis all reside in Northern California), recorded in just three days, and mixed in three more (with infamous producer Steve Albini, who has worked with Neurosis since 1999's *Times of Grace*), *Given to the Rising* sees these grizzled veterans channeling all their years of experience, fusing the seismic, suffocating fury of their earlier work with the more subtle textures and melodicism of their latter days. As for why they've made such an especially dark, aggressive record at this point in their careers, neither Kelly nor Von Till can really explain.

"There's no preconceived plans to what we do, there's no cerebral notions. This isn't intellectual music—it's very much gut music," Von Till says. "We're naturally introspective, which is a somber—not a negative, but a dark—mood. If you're a truly self-reflective person, then occasionally you take yourself through the winter of the soul."

TALKING TO KELLY AND Von Till is something like chatting with two of the Spartan warriors from the movie *300*. It's not that they're wearing leather Speedos or baring bronzen six-packs; it's that they speak about their band in bold, quasi-religious, "honor and glory"–type language. Words like *commitment*, *sacrifice*, *surrender*, and *spirit* come up a lot. It's no wonder that Neurosis have their own battle-ready motto, "Strength and Vision," which you can see emblazoned on many of their T-shirts and hoodies; the bandmates see their work as something of a war. "An internal, personal war with your demons and yourself," explains Von Till. "A war for making music that has any sort of soul in a world of imitation, a war against increasingly boring monoculture crap."

It's a battle the band has been fighting from the very beginning. When Oakland hardcore kids Kelly, Edwardson, and Roeder formed Neurosis 22 years ago, they were intent on creating more than just another rock band. (Von Till joined in 1990, Landis in '92.) The teenagers spent the first two weeks "not even really playing, just talking," recalls Kelly, "trying to lay the foundation for something that would last a lifetime." They wrote a list of six bands—"the only bands that matter"—on a piece of paper and stuck it up in their first practice space: Black Sabbath, Black Flag, Pink Floyd, Joy Division, and two lesser-known names, crust-punks Amebix and Rudimentary Peni.

"Thing was about these bands, it wasn't just their music," says Kelly. "Somehow, we were lucky enough to realize, at 15, 16, 17, that there was something more going on. Joy Division is about as real and from the heart as it gets. Black Flag was so visceral and raw, so totally willing to do their own thing and thrive on the backlash."

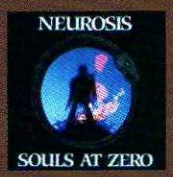
The latter proved to be an important lesson to the young Neurosis, who were making few fans with their eight-minute, keyboard-laden songs. "Aw, people fucking hated it," Kelly chuckles. "We got up onstage with keyboards, and people just left." But Neurosis "so didn't give a fuck" and soldiered on, playing any venue—including pizza parlors and private homes—and with any band that would have them. "We played a lot of shows with NOFX and Green Day in those days," he notes.

It wasn't until after the release of Neurosis' watershed third album, 1992's *Souls at Zero* (see sidebar), that audiences slowly began to come around. Amazingly, so did the major labels—though Neurosis' creative obstinacy quickly made them back off.

UNKNOWN PLEASURES

THE NEUROSIS ALBUMS YOU NEED TO OWN

SOULS AT ZERO
(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES, 1992)



After what singer-guitarist Steve Von Till calls "two albums of growing pains," Neurosis finally captured the sound that they heard in their heads: a dense, epic mélange of metal, hardcore, industrial, and psychedelia that forever expanded extreme music's palette.

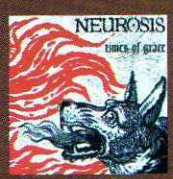
ENEMY OF THE SUN
(ALTERNATIVE TENTACLES, 1993)

On their fourth full-length, the band delved deeper into the spiritual, ritualistic nature of its work. The result is an eight-song atavistic exorcism opening with the tense, slow-building Sturm und Drang of "Lost" and climaxing in the 25-minute-plus tribal-drumming jam/freak-out "Cleanse."

THROUGH SILVER IN BLOOD
(RELAPSE, 1996)

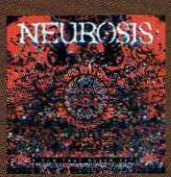
Containing Neurosis' best-known song, "Locust Star," *Through Silver in Blood* is still as devastating and disturbing as heavy music gets. Having channeled their darkest, most self-destructive emotions, the bandmates would give up playing material from the disc for three years and decide that they needed to, as Von Till puts it, "burn a little cleaner."

TIMES OF GRACE
(RELAPSE, 1999)



Evolving from the crushing metallurgy of the album's first half ("The Doorway," "Under the Surface") to the lush, more uplifting melodicism of later songs like "Belief" and "Away," *Times of Grace* is the transitional record that saw Neurosis finding their voice (Von Till and cofrontman Scott Kelly began to sing, not just scream)—and some light at the end of the tunnel.

A SUN THAT NEVER SETS
(RELAPSE, 2001)



Taking the direction of *Times of Grace*'s second half even further, Neurosis stripped away many of their sonic layers, turned down the distortion, and injected a pronounced folk strain into their music. Which isn't to say that *Sun* isn't still plenty heavy. Songs like "From the Hill" sound as if, to quote the lyrics, "the gods are screaming."

GIVEN TO THE RISING
(NEUROT, 2007)

The title track opens the album and sets the tone, bypassing Neurosis' signature quiet-to-very-loud dynamic and coming right in with a rolling, tectonic riff. What follows is the band's darkest, most metallic disc since *Through Silver in Blood*, but it's no throwback. Incorporating the gravelly-throated singing and finely woven ambience of Neurosis' new-millennial work, *Rising* is instead the culmination of the band's 22 years. **BG**

Neurosis playing California earlier this year

"WE'D CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF WHAT THE MAJOR-LABEL FKING MUSIC WORLD WAS ABOUT, AND WE KNEW WE HAD NO PLACE THERE."** —SCOTT KELLY

"We lived through that little post-Nirvana moment in time, when all these people were looking to sign...whatever," Kelly says. "We had all these offers thrown our way, and we always said the same thing: If we're gonna go to your major label, the first thing you're gonna do is give us complete control in everything we do and you'll have no say in it, and the second thing you're gonna do is give us a lot of your money so that we know that your commitment is strong. And it was funny how many times it got to that point, 'Oh, yeah, absolutely. Great. Yep, so we're gonna send you a contract.' And then it would never be there."

Neurosis encountered similar duplicity from many bigger metal bands, which, according to the singer-guitarist, "were saying things like, 'Oh, we really want to take you guys on tour. You guys really mean a lot to us,' and blah, blah, blah. And we were like, 'Great, send us an offer.' It never happened."

One band proved to be the exception: Pantera. "We hit New Orleans on this tour [in 1996]. Phil [Anselmo] came out, and I remember him specifically saying, 'We want to take you guys out. We're gonna send you an offer. What do you guys need to survive on the road?' We told him, and he said, 'Look out for the mail.' And it arrived within a week," says Kelly. "When we showed up on that tour, the first day, [Pantera bassist] Rex (Brown) was like, 'Hey, man, we got this dressing room, we don't use it. There's food in there, it's always warm. If you guys need it, feel free.' Just treated us like family right from the start. We were touring in a fucking van with no heat, and they would be like, 'C'mon, man, a few of you guys get to stay in our bus tonight and at least get fucking warm.' They were just the most real dudes that we ran into in that whole [music industry] world. That's a fucking shallow world, man, and they were just nothing like that. It was a really great experience."

What wasn't so great was Neurosis' reception from the audiences on the tour. "People were shocked most of the time. I can remember many times looking off to the side stage and seeing the Pantera guys just fucking laughing," Kelly recalls with a chuckle. "I mean, 99 percent of the people at those shows had no clue who we were or what we were about. And we had so much to offer them at that point." Neurosis were, after all, supporting what many still consider to be their best album, 1996's *Through Silver in Blood* (their Relapse debut), and their live show had recently expanded to include psychedelic video projections, making it a truly multisensory experience. But the average metalhead wasn't ready for it, and when Neurosis played the first two Ozzfests, in '96 and '97—they were invited by Sharon Osbourne, who had been turned on to them by a music writer/fan—the response wasn't much warmer. Still, according to Kelly, he and his bandmates got a lot out of the experience, especially on the inaugural tour, which Black Sabbath headlined. Opening for Ozzy & Co., he says, was "like getting to go to college. We were front and center every night, every song, just trying to glean some information from what they were doing."

More than anything, what the Neurosis guys were learning, however, was that they had to find a

NO LOVE LOST

THREE HEAVY-HITTING NEUROSIS FANS PAY TRIBUTE

AARON TURNER, ISIS

"While in high school, I mail-ordered a copy of *Enemy of the Sun* on LP. Upon its arrival, I threw it on my folks' turntable, lay down on the couch, and greedily absorbed the black-tar rumble emanating from the hi-fi. Until that point, I'd heard little music that had the capacity to terrify and inspire simultaneously, which is precisely the effect it had on me before the first side was even done spinning. By the time the album had reached its conclusion, I'd become a sworn devotee of Neurosis and have remained so ever since."

MARK MORTON, LAMB OF GOD

"Like Black Flag a generation before them, Neurosis created a completely new template [for heavy music]. Their songs aren't just songs, they're sculptures of sound, a sonic catharsis with timeless relevance. Neurosis' creative integrity remains uncompromised, and their impact immeasurable."

TROY SANDERS, MASTODON

"Scott Kelly's guest vocals on our last two albums [2004's *Leviathan* and 2006's *Blood Mountain*] were a dream come true. The impact of Neurosis on Mastodon has been of epic proportions. We would not exist on this level of passion and understanding if they had not led the way. Neurosis embody all things of greater power and being, and they deliver feelings of brutality, guttural life, and death in ways others can only imagine."

Turner

Morton

Sanders

TURNER: ROBIN LAANANEN

Neurosis have always been about music and "creating a family for each other," says Kelly (third from left)

BRENDAN TOBIN

different way to operate as a band. As they got older, got married, and had children, the touring life was taking an increasing toll and looking increasingly pointless. "We'd already caught a glimpse of what the major-label fucking music world was about, and we knew we had no place there, and we knew that our kids were just sitting at home waiting to be near their dads," Kelly says. "It just reached a point where we were all sitting in the van outside this club we were playing for the third time that year, and we were like, Why are we here? We've done this. Why did we start this band? It had nothing to do with touring. Touring wasn't even on the horizon when we started out. It was about music and creating a family for each other, and that was it. And that's always been it."

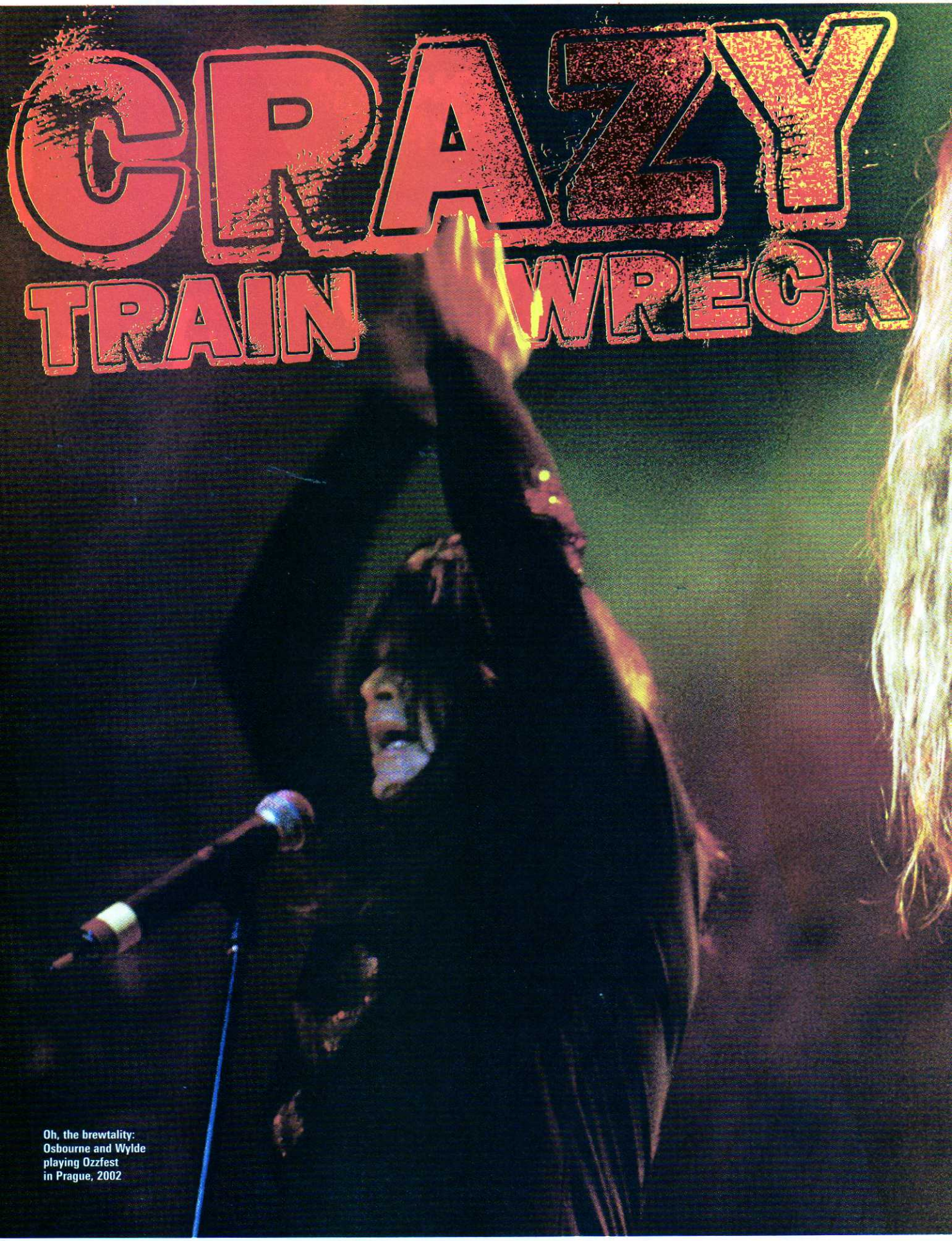
So, as the millennium turned, the band gave up full-time touring, weaned themselves off their label, Relapse, got day jobs—Kelly is a welder and a stagehand at a repertory theater, Von Till is a teacher, Edwardson works in a warehouse selling books, Roeder runs a plant nursery, and Landis is the sound guy at a museum—and refocused the rest of their time and energy on their families and their music. They started Neurot, which is run in its day-to-day operations by Von Till's wife, Kristin, and has since put out 50-plus albums by artists like Isis, Made Out of Babies, Battle of Mice (see page 64), and Red Sparowes. They've worked on numerous side projects—including, most recently, the supergroup of sorts Shrinebuilder, which Kelly just joined alongside Scott "Wino" Weinrich (the Hidden Hand, Saint Vitus, the Obsessed, etc.) and Sleep's former rhythm section, Al Cisneros and Chris Hakius, currently of OM. ("I'm super, super excited about it, and the initial riffs are really good," reports Kelly, though he cautions that most likely nothing will be released until '08.) The singer-guitarist also co-runs the podcast site combatmusicradio.com, which focuses on heavy music and blood sports and until recently boasted an old Neurosis friend, Anselmo, as its boxing commentator.

Kelly and Von Till clearly feel that taking control of every aspect of their various projects and reining in their touring schedule has only made Neurosis even more passionate about what they do. "Now we play when we want, where we want, and it's much more of a treasured event. People come from far away every time, and it makes it special... It makes it special for us. I mean, we're so grateful and appreciative that people think that highly of what we do, 'cause this is just personal music for us. It's not for other people to enjoy—we just have to do this," says Von Till. "And now we're at a point where everything we do is extremely tied into a more pure ethic of the do-it-yourself attitude that we came from, and it's just more gratifying this way."

They're both also very thankful to still be playing with the same group of individuals after nearly two decades. Such longevity is rare in the fickle music industry, but Neurosis have every intention of staying true to their founding concept of being a band to "last a lifetime."

"I've had some people tell me that it's a really dramatic thing to say or whatever," Kelly notes. And then, sounding once again very much like a Spartan warrior, he adds: "But it's the truth: Neurosis is going till one or all of us is dead."

CRAZY TRAIN WRECK



Oh, the brewtality: Osbourne and Wylde playing Ozzfest in Prague, 2002

A JOINT INTERVIEW WITH

OZZY OSBOURNE AND ZAKK WYLDE

SEEMED LIKE A GREAT IDEA, BUT THE ROAD TO HELL IS INDEED PAVED WITH GOOD INTENTIONS

BY DAN EPSTEIN

IN ALL THE YEARS THAT Zakk Wylde has served as Ozzy Osbourne's guitarist, the two rock legends have rarely been interviewed together. So with the release of *Black Rain* (Epic), Osbourne's first disc of new material since 2001's *Down to Earth*, finally upon us, we thought it would be cool to get this demonic duo on the phone to give us the lowdown on the disc. ▪ What we didn't count on, as we jumped through various logistical hoops to set up the conference call with Osbourne and Wylde, was that it would be all but impossible to keep the interview on topic—or even get a word in edgewise—once these gentlemen got going. In the end, admittedly, we didn't get much out of them about the new CD, which the pair recorded in Osbourne's home studio; but since the conversation that ensued was so hilarious, we thought we'd print it anyway.

ZAKK WYLDE Hey, brother! What's goin' on?

REVOLVER Hey, Zakk. We're still waiting for Ozzy to call in. In the meantime, can you tell us a bit about the new record?

WYLDE We had a blast makin' it, bro. It was just so much easier to do it at his house, instead of doing rehearsals and then doing it in a studio. Writing in the rehearsal space was always a drag. Ozzy would be like, "Zakk, I can't even think right now," because of the volume. I mean, after 15 minutes of the sound of nuclear bombs going off, he'd be like, "I gotta get outta here!"

OZZY OSBOURNE [*Suddenly joining in on the conference call*] Hallo, Zakk! Hallo, Dan!

WYLDE Oz! What are you doin', big guy?

OSBOURNE Oh, I'm down in Malibu. I've got my grandchildren around, would you believe? It's like that scene in *The Godfather* where he's chasing the kid around the vineyard. The only difference is that I haven't fallen into the fucking cabbages! Where are you?

WYLDE Right now, I'm out in Nashville, and I guess we're doing a show in Louisville [Kentucky] tomorrow. We've been knocking 'em out all over the place—three shows in a row, day off, another three in a row, day off, three in a row...

OSBOURNE If you can do it, that's all right. But when you actually get my fucking years around you, you'll be like, "Fuck that! Don't fucking disturb me when I'm just getting this cold one down my fucking neck!" [*Laughs*]

WYLDE Oz, Barbaranne [Wylde's wife] just came out for a couple of days. We did the show, and then I came back and took a couple of these Viagra-type pills I got [at a health-food store]. I swear to Christ I thought I was gonna have a fuckin' heart attack! [*Laughs*]

OSBOURNE You can't drink booze with them! Because what they do is, they give you a boner, but your blood pressure goes through the fucking roof!

WYLDE I know! I found out! I was sitting there pounding beers just to bring me down 'cuz I'm so fucking amped up! I'm in the bathroom, fuckin' pukin' and pissin' out of my ass, and Barb is goin', "Are you OK? You want me to send you to the hospital?" It's like, How did Zakk die? Was it a drug OD? Yeah, he was takin' fuckin' Viagra, and he collapsed!

"Zakk, sometimes you get into bed when you've had a few and sleep with me and Sharon!"
—OZZY OSBOURNE

OSBOURNE But people do, though! We were on the road, and we go to one place where this fucking doctor comes around with, like, a fucking suitcase full of samples. I said, "I heard it makes you blind," and he said, "No, just take half of one and wear glasses!" [*Laughs*]

WYLDE One day when we were working on the record, I come into the house and go into the music room, and Oz is laying there on the couch just watching the History Channel. I walk over and give him a kiss on the head and go, "Oz, what're you doin', buddy?" He puts his glasses on, and he goes, "Who the fuck are you?" [*Laughs*] I'm like, "Ozzy, it's me! It's Zakk!" And he's like, "Oh, I'm sorry, Zakk. Sometimes I don't know who the fuck I am, either."

OSBOURNE Zakk, sometimes you get

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into fucking bed when you've had a few and sleep with me and Sharon! [*Laughs*] Those fucking golfing shoes have gotta go, man. They leave fuckin' marks on my legs!

WYLDE Check this out—the other day, we're setting up the dates for the tour for the new album, and Sharon sits us down. She goes, "Now boys, when you get to Russia..." And Ozzy goes, "Why the fuck are we playing Russia?" [*Laughs*]

OSBOURNE I have a Russian woman working at the house now, and I told her, "Oh, you know, I'm going to Moscow." She goes, "You are? You will be taking bodyguard?" I'm like, "Why?" She goes, "They look at you and know you're foreigner—you wake up hog-tied!" She tells me I'm going to be kidnapped and have my fucking eyes poked out!

WYLDE Nice! [*Laughs*] Oh, you can't make this shit up! Before you know it, Oz, we'll be out on the road again. The madness will be starting all over again.

OSBOURNE Before you know it, we'll be fucking fightin', and I'll be complaining that my voice is going out again. The thing about it is, I'll be yelling at Sharon, "You're not touring me like that this time!" And she'll be like, "Come on, kids. Let's go to the shops." Like I'm not fucking there! "Hello! Hello! I'm here!" I don't even know where we're doing the shows, because nobody fucking talks to me!

WYLDE Ozzy just finds out when we get there! "Zakk, where are we at now?" "We're playing the Garden today, Oz." "Oh, great. What time are we onstage?" "Ten minutes!" [*Laughs*]

> "I was saying, we should call the album 'Chinese DemOZracy,' because this was the longest it's ever taken Oz to make an album."
> —ZAKK WYLDE

OSBOURNE People will come up to me and say, "Hi, Ozzy!" I'm like, "Do I know you?" "Well, I was at your house on New Year's Eve." "Oh, yeah? Where was I? Probably in some hospital somewhere..."

WYLDE When Oz was all banged up with the ATV accident [in December 2003], he was just coming out of the coma and he's whispering, "Zakky, Zakky." I bend down to hear him, because he's got the oxygen mask on, and he's trying to say, "Make sure they don't give me a tracheotomy." But as I'm pulling the oxygen thing off his face so I can hear what the fuck he's saying, the thing goes Whoosh! and the oxygen starts flying all over the place. He's going, "Sharon! He's trying to fucking kill me!"

OSBOURNE When I went back to the hospital to have them check all my metal bits, the guy goes to me, "Do you remember what you said to me when you were going into surgery?" I said, "I haven't a clue." He goes, "You grabbed me by the collar, and you said, 'If you fuck my tattoos up, I'll fucking kill you!'" [*Laughs*]

WYLDE And then I'm standing there with Sharon after the surgery, as Oz is coming in and out, and he kept fucking with the nurses. One nurse would come in, and he's going, "Oh, I'm hurtin' really bad, I need some more pain medication." So they're saucing him up with more morphine or whatever, and there's Oz, winking at me. And then another girl would come in, and he'd go, "Oh, she didn't give me anything! Can you give me something?" He was playing all of them!

OSBOURNE I'm the only patient in British medical history to get evicted from the hospital!

WYLDE The best is, Oz is going to all the nurses, [*groggy voice*] "Would you fancy fucking a guy like me?" Sharon just looks at me and goes, "Yeah, he's back!"

REVOLVER [*After several failed attempts to inject a question into the conversation*] So, Ozzy, what can you tell us about the new album?

OSBOURNE This album, I don't know, I didn't think I could come up with anything sober. But I was pleasantly surprised! And [coproducer] Kevin Churko was great to work with! He came up with some very good ideas for me. It's true that this album took a long time, but I'll bet you Axl still hasn't put a fucking vocal down yet.

WYLDE I was saying we should call the album *Chinese DemOZracy*, because this was the longest it's ever taken Oz to make an album. We'd put it out, and Axl would blow a fuckin' gasket. He'd go, "They can't use *Chinese Democracy*!" And I'd go, "No, it's *DemOZracy*! It has fuckin' *OZ* in it!"

OSBOURNE [*Abruptly signing off*] So listen, I'll speak to you later, Zakk!

WYLDE You got it, Oz. I'll see you in a bit. I love you, buddy.

OSBOURNE Bye. [*Hangs up*]

WYLDE Oh, the brewtality! [*Laughs*] Well, at least you got some good goofy-ass shit in there!

REVOLVER So, Zakk, what does the new record sound like?

WYLDE Just killer tunes with cool riffs, you know? It sounds like a fucking Ozzy record, brother!

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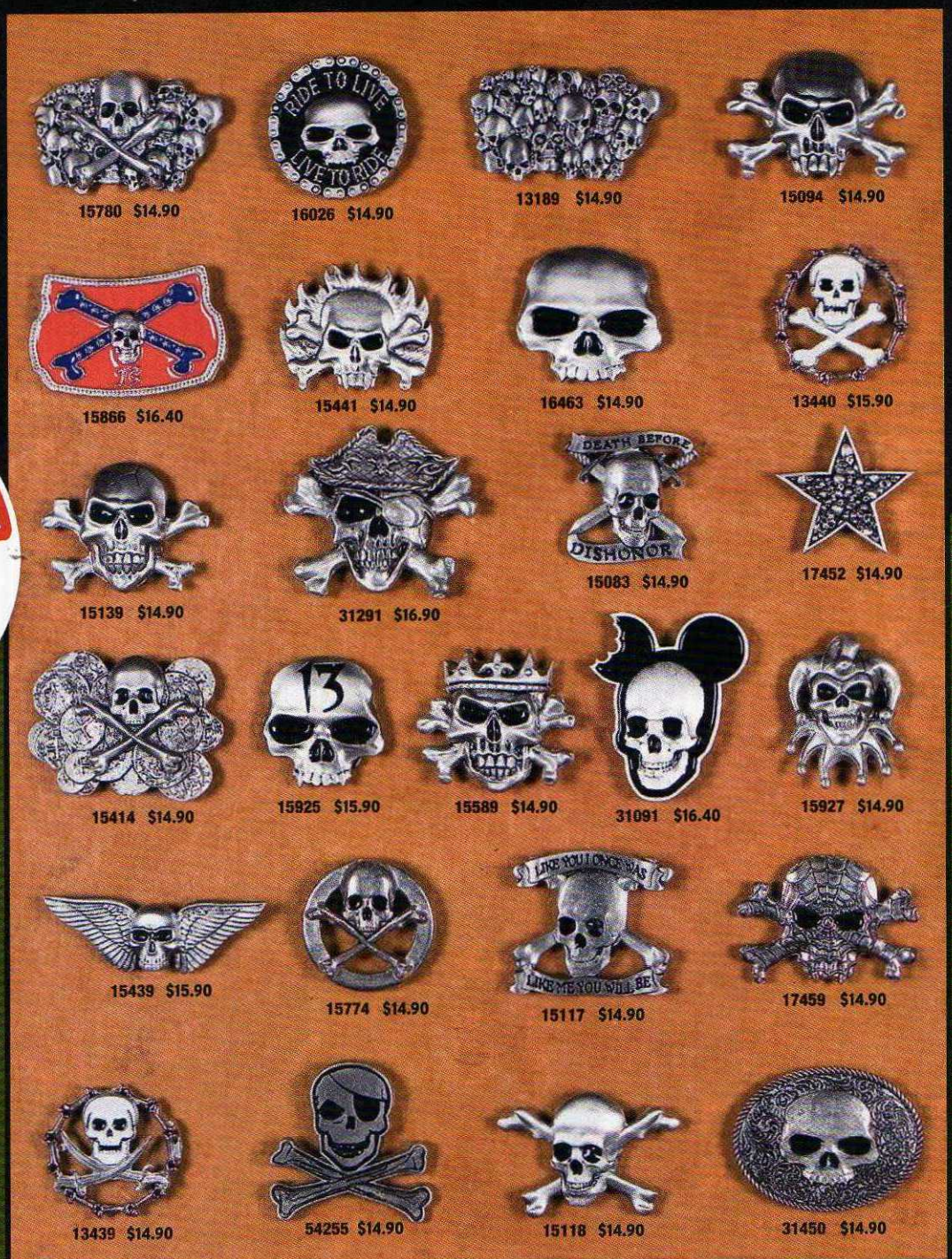

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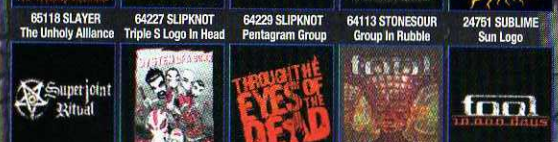
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52873 **LED ZEPPELIN** Stairway To Heaven Art
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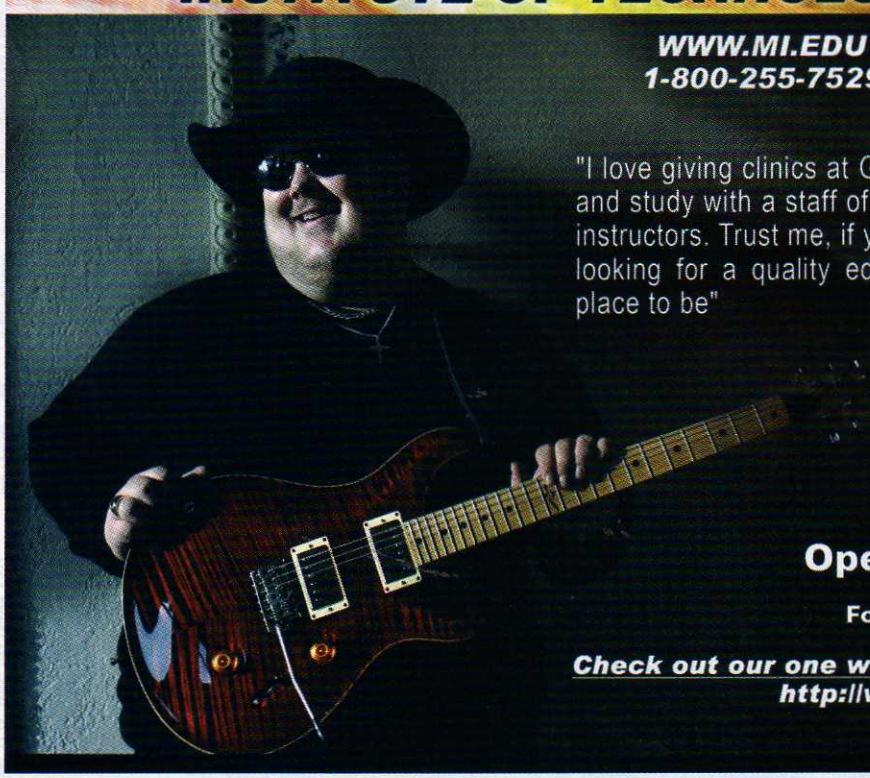

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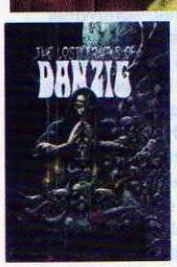


Danzig
THE LOST TRACKS OF DANZIG
(EVILIVE)
★★★★½

For nearly a decade now, Glenn Danzig has been talking about rounding up and releasing all his orphaned and/or unfinished songs. And, in fact, his numerous solo albums notwithstanding, there was no question that Evil Elvis still had some good stuff left in the can. The "leaked" versions of outtakes like "White Devil Rise" and "Cold Cold Rain," for example—which floated around the Internet for ages—were almost unlistenable from a recording point of view, but they clearly had the potential to stand with the best of Danzig's output.

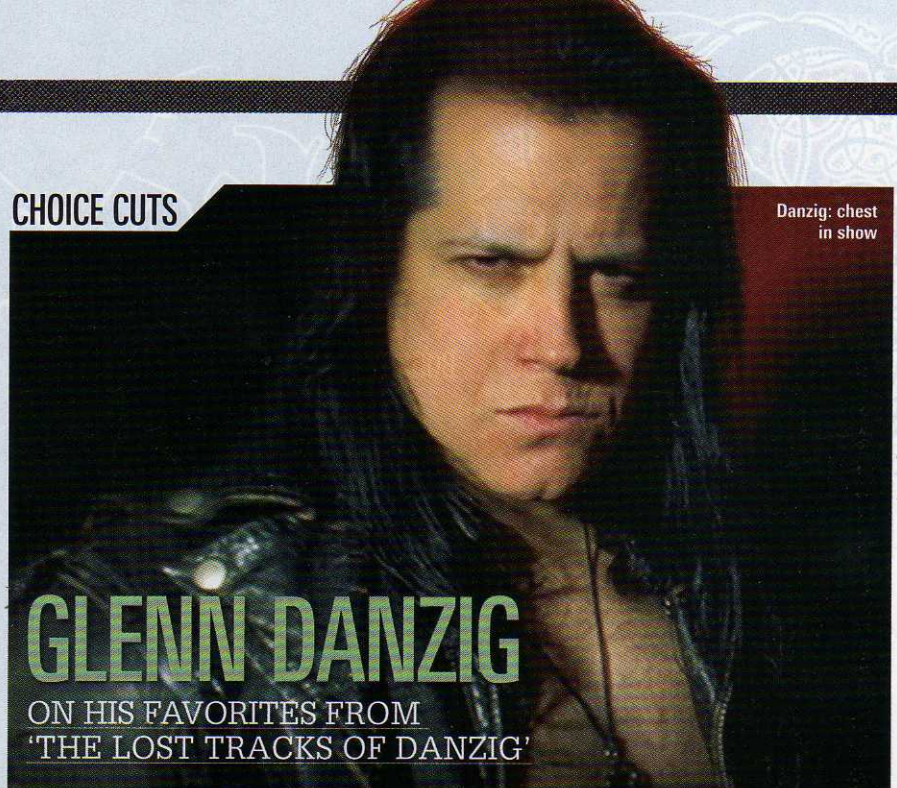
Still, no one could have guessed how deeply satisfying a two-CD set of Danzig's "lost tracks" would actually be. No mere odds 'n' sods, collector's gold-style barrel scraping, *The Lost Tracks of Danzig* plays like a greatest-hits compilation from a parallel universe. Arranged chronologically, the set's 26 previously unreleased cuts cover just about every phase of Danzig's solo career, save his operatic *Black* CONTINUED ▶▶

ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC RODRIGUEZ AND JOSH BERNSTEIN FOR NUMBERFOUNDATION.COM

Aria excursions. From the post-Samhain power punch of "Pain Is Like an Animal" and "When Death Had No Name," recorded during the sessions for his self-titled 1988 debut, to the satanic-love sludge of "Lady Lucifera," which wasn't completed in time for 2004's *Circle of Snakes*, *Lost Tracks* testifies to Danzig's impressive ability to consistently conjure the kind of swaggering riffage and darkly evocative lyrics that most metal bands would gladly sacrifice their own mothers for. One of *Lost Tracks*' highlights, the ominous "Satan's Crucifiction," was actually written as a joke during the making of *Danzig 4p* (see "Choice Cuts"), but the knowledge of its less-than-serious origins doesn't detract from the song's earth-shuddering power. If anything, it just provides endearing evidence that the notoriously cantankerous Danzig actually has a sense of humor about himself and his work.

Most of the songs on *Lost Tracks* were incomplete when Danzig exhumed them, necessitating additional vocal and instrumental overdubs. While the temptation to extensively rework the songs must have been massive, Danzig wisely stayed true to the sound and spirit of the originals. Thus, the finished material is appealingly diverse; most of the cuts bear at least some sonic resemblance to the albums they were written for—and, in several cases, are as good as or better than anything on said records. The majestic, organ-stoked "Cold Cold Rain" (reminiscent of "Theme From an Imaginary Western" by early-Seventies hard-rock demigods Mountain) surely would have been a standout track on 1990's *Danzig II—Lucifuge*, just as the bluesy "Crawl Across Your Killing Floor" and the slow-burning "Bound by Blood" would have elevated 1999's *Danzig 6:66—Satan's Child* and 2002's *Danzig 7—I Luciferi*, respectively. Throw in some choice covers of T. Rex's "Buick McKane," the Germs' "Caught in My Eye," and David Bowie's "Cat People," and you've got a real bloodfeast for any Danzig fiend. **DAN EPSTEIN**

CHOICE CUTS



Danzig: chest in show

GLENN DANZIG

ON HIS FAVORITES FROM 'THE LOST TRACKS OF DANZIG'

"SATAN'S CRUCIFICTION"

This one didn't get finished at the time, because we originally just did it during [1994's] *Danzig 4p* as a joke on [then–Def American label manager] Mark Didia, because he kept going, "The new record's not satanic, right?" We finally had [bassist] Eerie Von give this track to him and tell him, "They're fucking the record up! It's so satanic, it's crazy!" Mark immediately got in his car and drove to the studio. He was losing his mind, flipping out—"I want to hear the whole record NOW!" His eyes were bugging out of his head! We finally told him it was a joke. But I love the track. I listen to it now, and it's so cool.

"CRAWL ACROSS YOUR KILLING FLOOR"

It's a very bluesy, very dark song, especially the lyrics. I remember on the *Danzig 4p* tour, I did *Loveline* with Adam Carolla. I was talking about priests molesting kids and all this stuff, and all these Catholic girls called up, going, "That doesn't happen! That's a lie!" I'm like, "It's not a lie." Sure enough, all these years later, they can't hide it anymore, and the lawsuits still keep coming. It's great to be like, "I told you so, you fucking Catholic fucks!"

"WARLOK"

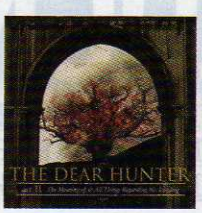
When we were doing [1996's] *Danzig 5*, I realized that I could never do this song the way I wanted with the engineer we had, so I just stopped working on it. Which I'm glad I did, because I love the way it came out here. It's based on a true story from when I was a little kid, about a girl who enters some kind of, let's say, different religious organization. And then she wants to get out, and can't.

"WHITE DEVIL RISE"

This was basically a direct response to [Nation of Islam leader] the Rev. Louis Farrakhan and his diatribes. There are some things that Farrakhan says that I agree with, but there are some things that are just retardedly insane. The song is like, "You're calling me a white devil? That's great, thank you! But don't blame me for all your fucking problems!" **DE**

Black Light Burns
CRUEL MELODY
(I AM: WOLFPACK)
★★★½

Since departing, then rejoining, then departing the lamest "metal" band of the past decade (Limp Bizkit), axman Wes Borland has kept himself busy with a number of projects, all of which have been hamstrung by the lack of a solid frontman. Now, in this dark electronic outfit (which also includes NIN's Danny Lohner and A Perfect Circle's Josh Freese), Borland has stepped up to the mic himself, and the results, while a little Trent Reznor Lite, definitely don't fall limp. *Cruel Melody* is full of sensuous, layered atmospherics and addictive melodies. It's not music to break stuff to, but it could set the mood for a little nookie. **PETER GIANNASCOLI**



The Dear Hunter
ACT II: THE MEANING OF, & ALL THINGS REGARDING MS. LEADING
(TRIPLE CROWN)
★★★

Judging by his choice of band names and CD titles, Dear Hunter leader Casey Crescenzo (ex–the Receiving End of Sirens) has a thing for wordplay, but his group's sweeping prog screamo is no joke. Crescenzo has a big voice, and he belts out every verse here like he's trying to find his way out of a cave. He also has big ambition, piling on keyboard fugues and left-field stylistic quick changes—Styx, and especially Faith No More, turn up here just as often as My Chem. It doesn't always work, but when it does, *Act II* is plenty impressive. Now if someone could do something about those puns. **REED JACKSON**

The Fall of Troy
MANIPULATOR
(EQUAL VISION)
★★

You know that guy with the long gray hair who's always shredding in the corner at Guitar Center? Well, listening to the Fall of Troy's *Manipulator*, you get the feeling singer-axman-songwriter Thomas Erak will be said dude in about 20 years. Sure, his Mars Voltian post-hardcore trio's talent is undeniable, but his need to cram an obscene amount of notes and time changes into each track produces a schizophrenic mess of half-realized riffs and fluttering falsettos. The one exception is the downshifting "Quarter Past," which shows the band creating something that is not only technically impressive but won't give you a headache, either. **JONAH BAYER**

Cephalic Carnage

Cephalic Carnage
XENOSAPIEN
(RELAPSE)
★★★★

Self-described "hydrogrind" band Cephalic Carnage have finally stopped passing around the blunt (for a second) and crafted a refreshingly sober album. That's not to say *Xenosapien* isn't brutal—in fact, it's heavier and more neck-snapping than anything the Colorado quintet has ever put out. But whereas the genre-hopping on 2005's *Anomalies* seemed haphazard and tongue-in-cheek, here the band takes its proficiency in various styles (jazz, doom, death, and black metal) and crafts unnervingly focused gems. Even Lenzig Leal's vocals are more refined: The clean parts are more haunting, the harsh parts more sinister. Hopefully, this is a sign of serious carnage to come. **GERRY MAK**

Despised Icon
THE ILLS OF MODERN MAN
(CENTURY MEDIA)
★★★★

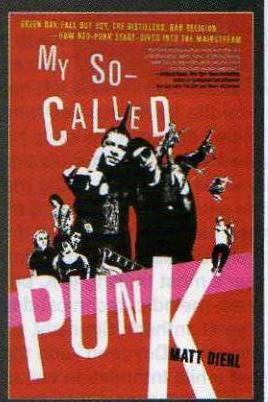
Deathcore? Grindcore? How about justplain-goodcore? This Montreal sextet's sophomore full-length is a head-spinning exposition of ensemble fury: Each of its 10 tracks covers more sonic ground in four or five minutes than many bands do on an entire album. Alex Erian's and Steve Marois' husky growls may take hours to decode, but the truth is they're secondary to drummer Alex Pelletier's cranium-splitting, double-time pummel, while Eric Jarrin and new member Al Glassman (Goratory, Burn in Silence) lock in and coil their guitars around each other so tightly they sound like one person with four hands. All in all, a pretty healthy set of *Ills*. **GARY GRAFF**

Job for a Cowboy
GENESIS
(METAL BLADE)
★★★½

Job for a Cowboy seem to be extreme metal's new inspirational story: The teenage bandmates from Glendale, Arizona, scored national press and a deal with Metal Blade based solely on their MySpace popularity and *Doom* EP—a status they live up to on their full-length debut. Dense (dig guitarists Ravi Bhadriraju and Bobby Thompson's web of grinding riffs) and fast (the album's 10 tracks barely top 30 minutes), *Genesis* is a fine showcase for a group that obviously worships Death, **CONTINUED ▸▸**

TURN THE PAGE

REVOLVER BOOK CLUB

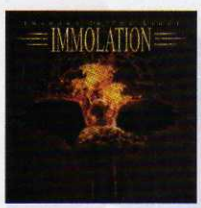


My So-Called Punk
BY MATT DIEHL
(ST. MARTIN'S GRIFFIN)
★★★½

Music journalist (and former *Revolver* contributing editor) Matt Diehl's neo-punk tell-almost-all touches on everything from the politics of Warped Tour to Tim and Brody Armstrong's train wreck of a marriage to the founding of uber-indie Epitaph Records and asks, "What is punk, anyway?" *So-Called* isn't meant as a comprehensive history of the movement—Rancid get more ink here than the Ramones or Fugazi—but the stops it does make on American punk's bumpy route from Gilman Street to Hot Topic are all well worth the visit. ALLISON STEWART

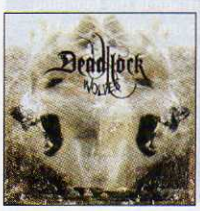
Immolation

Morbid Angel, and Cannibal Corpse. But JFAC inject enough of their own youthful dynamism to suggest that a powerful new metal force is indeed rising. **BRAD ANGLE**



Immolation
SHADOWS IN THE LIGHT
(CENTURY MEDIA)
★★★★½

A few albums back, these New Yorkers successfully took the left-hand path away from the traditional death-metal sound they helped create in the early Nineties. And *Shadows in the Light* continues down the road less traveled, falling more in line with the paroxysmal jazz-grind of later-era Gorguts than any all-brutal-all-the-time NYDM pummellers. Case in point: "World Agony," the year's most thrilling (OK, only) doom-laden, quasi-melodic, technical-death, pro-environmental anthem. Similarly, tunes like "The Weight of Devotion" and the title track prove that while Immolation are as crushing as ever, they have become way more thoughtful and adventurous. **GREG PRATT**



Deadlock
WOLVES
(LIFEFORCE)
★★★

It sounds like a very bad idea: vegan, straightedge, progressive, goth-tinged, melodic death metal—with clean female vocals. German sextet Deadlock dare to attempt this potentially catastrophic fusion, with surprisingly decent results. There's a certain predictability to the gloomy keyboard breakdowns and the Gothenburg guitar play, and the band too often tries to jam every other heavy-music style into each song. But when covocalist Johannes Prem's death growl gives way to the clear power of Sabine Weniger on the choruses, it all coheres—in several cases, with supremely catchy results. **ADEM TEPEDELEN**

Ion Dissonance
MINUS THE HERD
(ABACUS)
★★★★

For their sophomore CD, these chaos-loving Quebeckers not only got a new singer (Kevin McCaughey) but also tightened and refined their sound, pulling surprising depth and nuance from their sonic maelstrom. Their basic tack—abruptly shifting between straight 4/4 and staggering triplets so the riffs CONTINUED ▸▸

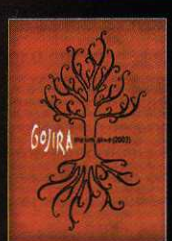
PEEP SHOW

THE LATEST IN DVDS

The Jesus Lizard
LIVE
(MVD)
★★★½

As captured on this DVD, filmed October 4, 1994, at Boston's Venus de Milo club, noise-rock heroes the Jesus Lizard whiplash the pulsing crowd, roaring through a first-rate set spanning their first EP through their then-latest album, *Down*. It's madman singer David Yow who delivers the most punishment, however, literally entangling himself with audience members as his band cranks out a pummeling cover of Soundgarden's "Mailman." **ROB O'CONNOR**

Gojira
THE LINK ALIVE
(LISTENABLE)
★★★★



An intriguing snapshot of Gojira before their groundbreaking 2006 album, *From Mars to Sirius*, this DVD features a 2003 16-song set filmed in Bordeaux, France, as well as 20 minutes of archival concert footage from '96 and an artsy video for the track "Love," off the band's debut, *Terra Incognita*. That and the other musically complex and surreally futuristic songs may be from the past, but they're still ahead of our time. **JON WIEDERHORN**

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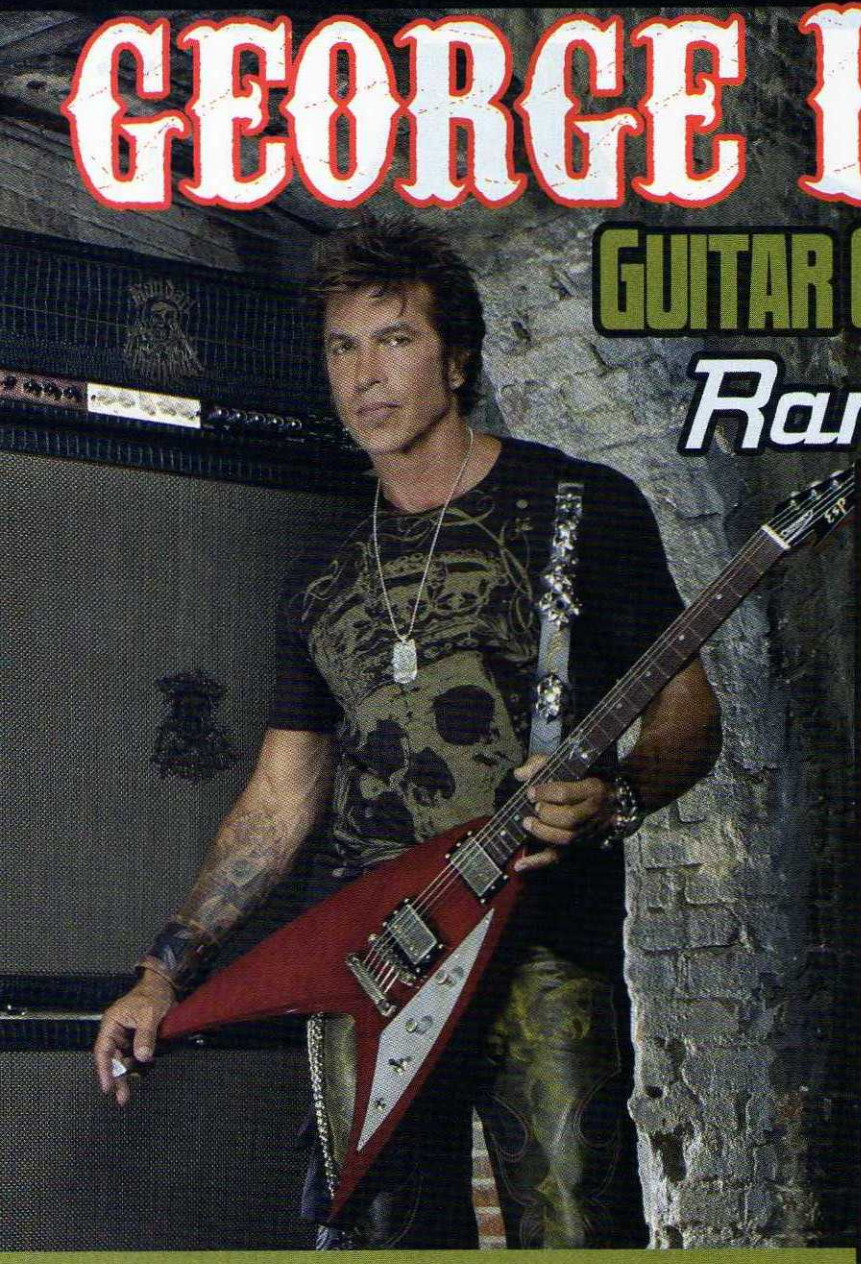

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Marduk

take on a fractured, stuttering momentum—remains brutally effective, and they've enhanced the impact by paying more attention to guitar tone, making it possible to distinguish between the two guitars and bass. One thing that hasn't changed is the muscular intensity of drummer JF Richard, whose double-kick work makes jackhammers seem slow. **J.D. CONSIDINE**

Marduk
ROM 5:12
(REGAIN)
★★★½

After 17 years of blasphemous abandon, Marduk still find ways to take their unabashed experimentalism to new evil extremes. Not content to be mere speed demons, vocalist Mortuus, guitarist Morgan Håkansson, and their cohorts here (including guest contributors Joakim Göthburg, who is the band's former drummer, and Nemtheanga of Primordial) mesh their satanic strike with grungey, doomy riffs on the mausoleum-opening march "Imago Mortis" and the hypnotic "Accuser/Opposer." Imagine a horde of bloodthirsty Vikings storming a church mid-Mass to the stoner grooves of Cathedral or Clutch. **DAVE WEDGE**

Oxbow
THE NARCOTIC STORY
(HYDRA HEAD)
★★★★

It's hard to get past the spectacle that is Eugene Robinson. The Oxbow singer picks fights, waves his junk around, and howls like a man who's stared into the void. Were it not for his antics, more listeners might notice that Oxbow are one of the best groups playing in the old post-punk style (think Touch & Go Records circa 1992). On *The Narcotic Story*, Robinson's bandmates alternate between tricky metallic riffs and melancholic passages at times augmented by a sighing string section. The frontman's histrionics make it all an acquired taste, but if you can stomach a bit of melodrama, it's a flavor you'll likely savor. **BRENT BURTON**

We Are the Fury
VENUS
(ONE BIG SPARK/EAST WEST)
★★★

Like Head Automatica/Glassjaw singer Daryl Palumbo (who coproduced and contributes backing vocals here), these young Ohioans are convinced that what the hardcore scene needs in these overpopulated times is more glam-rock glitter. So on their first full-length, lead mewler Jeremy Lublin and his bandmates trick out their nervy bash-and-crash with trash-garage guitar riffs and Roxy Music saxophone licks, most of which probably came straight from their dads' vinyl collections. It's a smart move: The added flash makes these otherwise so-so songs shine. **MIKAEL WOOD**

CONTINUED ▶▶

Since its inception in 1999, VampireFreaks.com has steadily risen in popularity among the gothic / industrial and underground alternative scene, getting recent media exposure and even harsh criticism from conservatives. Whether you love it or hate it, this Brooklyn, NY based website has become the dark alternative to myspace. Except unlike the big corporate sites, Vampirefreaks is privately owned and developed, with a focus on the underground industrial scene. With over 900,000 members, 2,000 bands and 4 million hits a day, VF has become its own virtual army. Always being updated with new features, music interviews and updates.

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Antigama

Total F**king Destruction
ZEN AND THE ART OF TOTAL FKING DESTRUCTION**
(TRANSLATION LOSS)
★★★★

The long-running side project of drummer-vocalist Rich Hoak, who also delivers the blast beats in re-formed grindcore pioneers Brutal Truth, Total Fucking Destruction come off like BT's funnier, nerdier siblings on their Translation Loss debut. *Zen* packs a sardonic, politically themed grindcore mini-epic and—no fooling—an acoustic-grind EP into 27 minutes; but the real highlight is the accompanying video footage, which finds TFD ripping through some of the best tunes not on the album, including the hilariously titled (at least if you're an Anal Cunt fan) "Seth Putnam Was Wrong About a Lot of Things But Seth Putnam Was Right About You." **AARON BURGESS**

Antigama
RESONANCE
(RELAPSE)
★★★

If you can do without little niceties like melody, coherence, and emotional range, these Polish dissidents' futuristic style of experimental grindcore will come off as perversely fun. Every bit as punishing as 2005's *Zeroland*, *Resonance* finds Antigama cramming many albums' worth of tempo shifts, roto-tom rolls, android-wooing electronic effects, and wolverine-in-a-washing-machine growls into one-minute sonic seizures that only the most dedicated listeners will be able to tell apart. Fans of bands like Nasum and Discordance Axis will surely revel in the chaos. **DAMON ORION**

WHOLE LOTTA...

POST-METAL

Boris with Michio Kurihara
RAINBOW
(DRAG CITY)
★★★

This collaboration with legendary psych guitarist Michio Kurihara (Ghost) finds Japanese drone merchants Boris gently entering abstract, pastoral territory and only occasionally working up into a full-fledged freak-out. With its fractured melodies and howling heaviness, *Rainbow* will please lysergic trippers far more than the doom-seekers turned on by Boris' recent dalliance with Sunn O))).

JASON FERGUSON

Irepress
SAMUS OCTOLOGY
(TRANSLATION LOSS)
★★★½

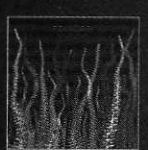
On their debut album, these fussily named Boston brainiacs take cues from Tool's more prog-tastic moments, calmly unspooling long reels of hypno-metal with leafy-green Seventies fusion drizzled on top. Wordless, bottomless, and eerily sedate, this is probably what it sounds like when you drown in honey. A sweet way to go, for sure.

KEN McINTYRE

Nadja
TOUCHED
(ALIEN8)
★★★★

Shoegazing Canuck duo Nadja turn sheets of distortion and buried drums into a symphony of simmering malevolence, a long-smothered force about to erupt. Consider the title a warning: *Touched* can mean "molested" or "crazy" (as in "touched in the head"); after taking in this titanic slab of smoldering drone and monolithic roar, you'll feel a bit of both.

REED JACKSON



Pelican
CITY OF ECHOES
(HYDRA HEAD)
★★★½

Although the four instrumentalists in Pelican are best known for their epic metal dirges, on their latest full-length they let their melodic Midwestern roots show. Sure, there's plenty of detuned riffing here, but there are also enough subdued hooks and wide-open ambience to keep you guessing what will come next.

JONAH BAYER

TransmissionO
MEMORY OF A DREAM
(CANDLELIGHT)
★★★

These Dutch entries in the claim-the-Neurosis-throne marathon (mostly) impress on their second disc. The anti-melodies in opener "Cocoon" and soaring clean vocals on "Token" captivate, but the repetitive chant "Let the spirit fly" in "Condor" shines a little too much like their heroes' *Silver in Blood* for TransmissionO to truly set themselves apart from the pack.

GREG PRATT

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Dio (left) and Iommi turn up the night

LIVE AND IN CONCERT!

Heaven and Hell

A DYNAMIC **DIO** AND HIS FELLOW SABBATH VETS PAINT THE TOWN BLACK

NEW YORK CITY
RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL, MARCH 30, 2007

AS OZZY OSBOURNE DROPS HIS new solo album (see page 88), Black Sabbath songwriters Tony Iommi and Bill Ward have broken a 14-year silence with Sabbath's second-most-famous singer, Ronnie James Dio, and hit the road for a long-overdue reunion. The tour coincides with the release of the compilation *Black Sabbath: The Dio Years*, the creation of which encouraged Dio, guitarist Iommi, and bassist Butler to reconvene in Birmingham, England, and write three new songs. For legal reasons, the band, which has recorded three studio albums together over the decades, has been proscribed from using the Sabbath name and now calls itself Heaven and Hell. But it's pretty clear that the magic we'll be witnessing tonight at Radio City Music Hall is indeed Black.

Though they're exhuming songs they haven't played since 1993, Iommi and Butler perform with a new level of aggression and hunger. Iommi balances rib-rattling riffs with textural flourishes, while Butler adds fills that keep even the most rudimentary passages sounding fresh. But it's Dio who steals the show. Not only does he hit every note with resounding clarity but he accompanies each passage with hand and arm gestures that make him look like an entertaining cross between a sign-language interpreter and a hyperkinetic mime.

During the set, Heaven and Hell burn through epics like "Sign of the Southern Cross" and "Falling Off the Edge of the World" with equal parts finesse and rage, achieving maximal headbanging velocity when they blast into "The Mob Rules" and "Computer God." Unfortunately, they repeatedly lose their momentum due to a strangely ordered set list. The infectious barrage of "Lady Evil" segues into the uninspired, trudging "I"; the blazing new song "The Devil Cried" is followed by a dull drum solo; an astounding set-closer of "Heaven and Hell" is followed with a tepid encore number, "Lonely Is the Word."

Still, the highlights are many. "Voodoo" is a full-fledged pagan's delight; "Die Young," though lyrically laughable, is sweeping and dramatic; and "Heaven and Hell" is pure cartoon brilliance: 11 minutes of projected wraiths, crashing, sing-along riffs, and pumping devil horns. Dio recently said he's going to record another solo CD before even considering doing a full-length Heaven and Hell disc, which is a shame. In the meantime, at least he's giving us his very beast. **JON WIEDERHORN**

PHOTOS BY JUSTIN BORUCKI

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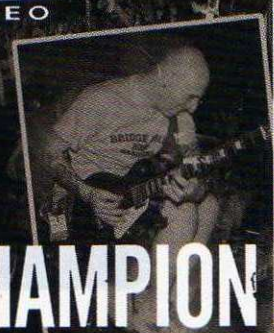
Death Before Dishonor photo courtesy of Todd Pollock. Champion photos courtesy of Chrissie Good.

DVD VIDEO



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MICROSOFT ZUNE

Microsoft's handheld Zune has so far been available in three colors: black, white, and brown. But if it's a more shocking visual you're after, check out the new pink color scheme. Under its spiffy hood, the new Zune offers all the same functions as the original model, including 30GB of storage, playback of music and video files, and the ability to wirelessly share music between Zunes.
$249.99 / zune.net

iTRIP NANO

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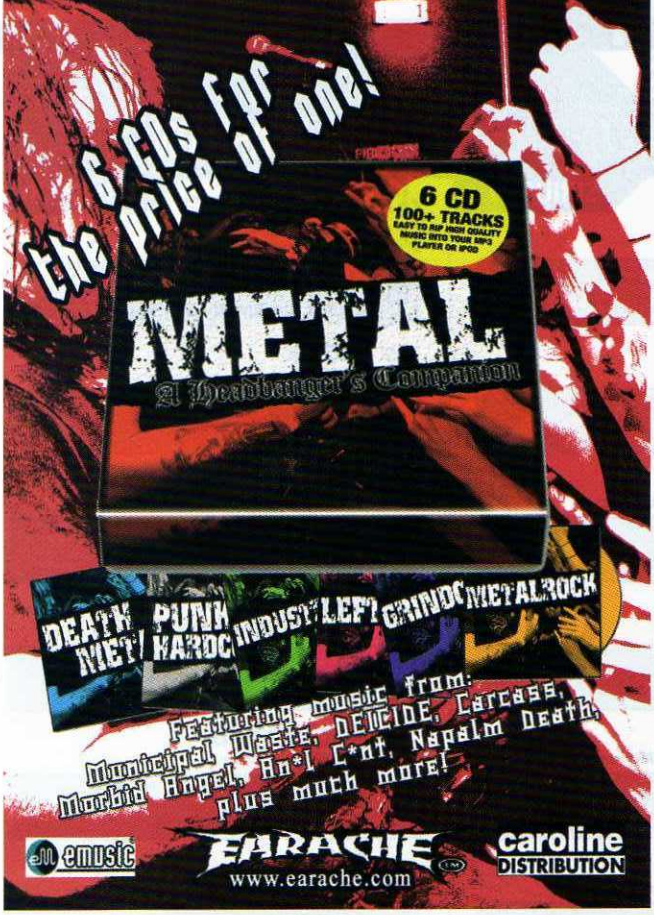
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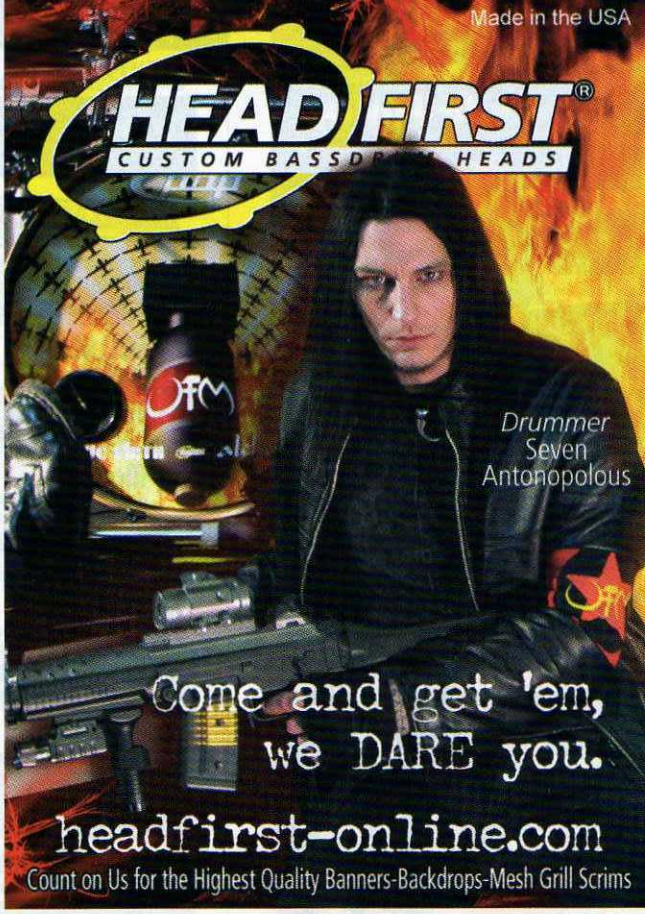
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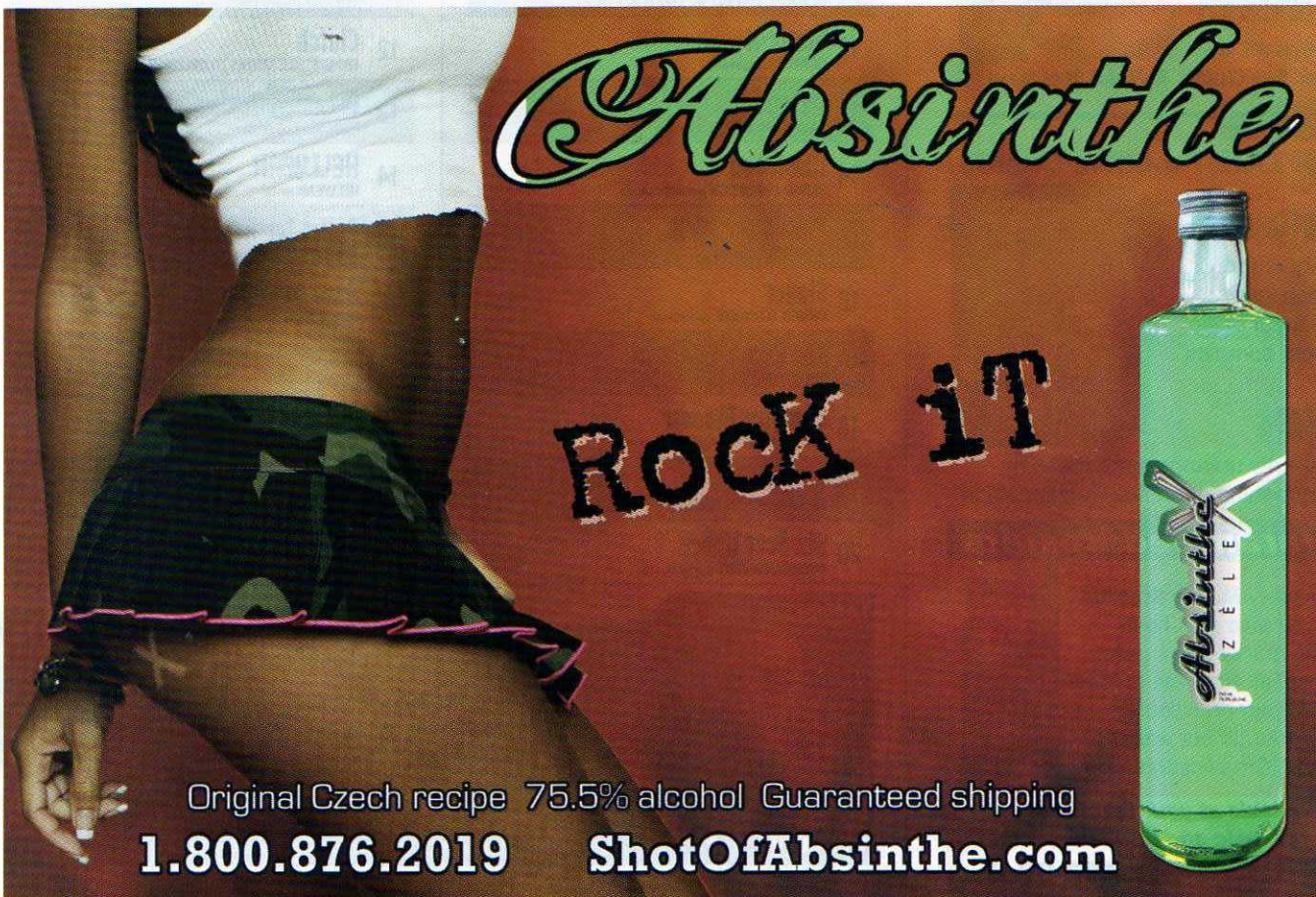
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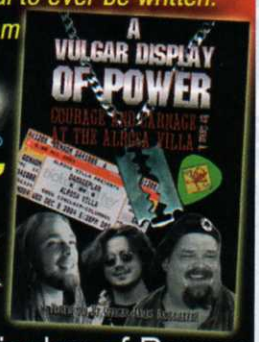

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IN THE REAR

SIRIUS SATELLITE RADIO CHARTS

TOP 20 ALBUMS OF THE MONTH, AS HEARD ON...

	HARD ATTACK SIRIUS 27	OCTANE SIRIUS 20
01	**Machine Head** THE BLACKENING (ROADRUNNER)	**Linkin Park** MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT (WARNER BROS.)
02	**HELLYEAH** HELLYEAH (EPIC)	**Chevelle** VENA SERA (EPIC)
03	**Shadows Fall** THREADS OF LIFE (ATLANTIC)	**Sevendust** ALPHA (7BROS./ASYLUM)
04	**Megadeth** UNITED ABOMINATIONS (ROADRUNNER)	**Evanescence** THE OPEN DOOR (WIND-UP)
05	**Type O Negative** DEAD AGAIN (SPV)	**Tool** 10,000 DAYS (VOLCANO/ZLG)
06	**Chimaira** RESURRECTION (FERRET)	**Stone Sour** COME WHAT(EVER) MAY (ROADRUNNER)
07	**Killswitch Engage** AS DAYLIGHT DIES (ROADRUNNER)	**Finger Eleven** THEM VS. YOU VS. ME (WIND-UP)
08	**Black Sabbath** BLACK SABBATH: THE DIO YEARS (RHINO)	**Nine Inch Nails** YEAR ZERO (INTERSCOPE)
09	**Lamb of God** SACRAMENT (EPIC)	**Papa Roach** THE PARAMOUR SESSIONS (GEFFEN)
10	**In This Moment** BEAUTIFUL TRAGEDY (CENTURY MEDIA)	**Saliva** BLOOD STAINED LOVE STORY (ISLAND)
11	**Dimmu Borgir** IN SORTE DIABOLI (NUCLEAR BLAST)	**Disturbed** TEN THOUSAND FISTS (REPRISE)
12	**Static-X** CANNIBAL (REPRISE)	**Clutch** FROM BEALE STREET TO OBLIVION (DRT)
13	**Byzantine** SALVATION DVD (PROSTHETIC)	**Breaking Benjamin** PHOBIA (HOLLYWOOD)
14	**Mastodon** BLOOD MOUNTAIN (WARNER BROS.)	**HELLYEAH** HELLYEAH (EPIC)
15	**Poison the Well** VERSIONS (FERRET)	**Bullet for My Valentine** THE POISON (TRUSTKILL/JIVE)
16	**Slayer** CHRIST ILLUSION (AMERICAN)	**Ozzy Osbourne** BLACK RAIN (EPIC)
17	**The End** ELEMENTARY (RELAPSE)	**Strata** STRATA PRESENTS THE END OF THE WORLD (WIND-UP)
18	**Vampire Mooose** SERENADE THE SAMURAI (ROTTEN)	**Godsmack** IV (REPUBLIC/UNIVERSAL)
19	**Gojira** FROM MARS TO SIRIUS (PROSTHETIC)	**Chris Cornell** CARRY ON (INTERSCOPE)
20	**Six Feet Under** COMMANDMENT (METAL BLADE)	**In This Moment** BEAUTIFUL TRAGEDY (CENTURY MEDIA)

LAST RECORD I BOUGHT...

THE LOCUST YEARS, HAMMERS OF MISFORTUNE

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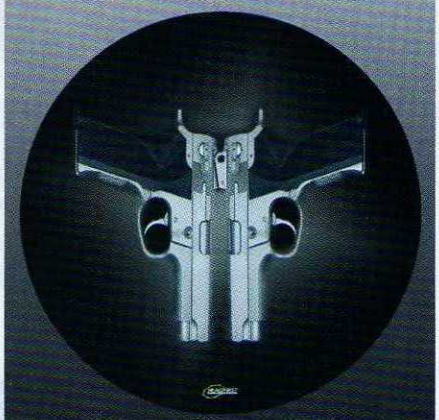
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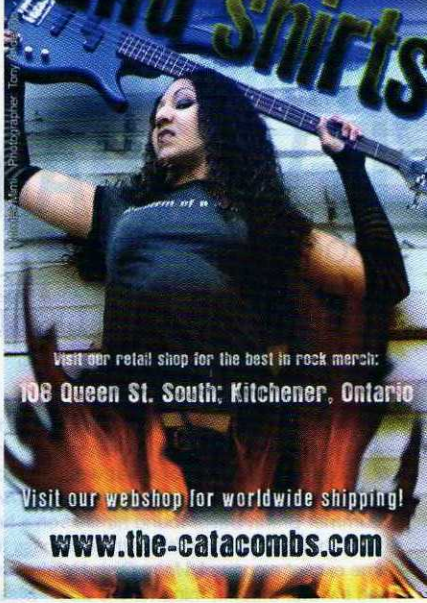
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THE STORIES BEHIND METAL'S GREATEST ALBUM COVERS

THIS MONTH:

Mastodon's 'LEVIATHAN'

PROOF THAT AT LEAST ONE BOOK ON YOUR HIGH SCHOOL READING LIST IS NOT A WASTE OF TIME

A detail of Romano's elaborate 52-by-52-inch oil painting was used for the cover of the *Leviathan* LP (top). The artist's early ideas included a whale in a monstrance (above, right), a vessel used to hold the consecrated Host in Catholic churches. He discarded the concept in favor of a more dramatic look (above, left).

AT ONE FATEFUL POINT DURING the time when Atlanta's Mastodon were gathering ideas for what would become their 2004 breakthrough album, *Leviathan*, drummer Brann Dailor found himself on a hellish 30-hour plane trip with nothing to pass the time except a copy of *Moby-Dick*. He already had a water motif in mind for the disc—Mastodon's previous record, *Remission*, was fire-themed—but before he read Herman Melville's 1851 maritime classic about Captain Ahab's hunt for the "salt-sea mastodon," Dailor admits that his ideas for what eventually became *Leviathan* were "pretty fucking vague."

Enter Paul Romano, who had done the artwork for *Remission* and Mastodon's 2001 EP, *Lifesblood*, and has since completed covers for Trivium, the Red Chord, and Hate Eternal, to mention just a few. "Brann called me from an airport somewhere and said, 'I just read *Moby-Dick*. You should read it. I think I'm gonna base the next record on it.'"

Not only did the Philadelphia-based artist read the novel, long a staple of high school English classes, but he also did extensive research. "I read critical essays on the book and on Melville," he explains. "I even went to the Philadelphia Public Library and saw the original book that Melville was inspired by—*Narrative of the Most Extraordinary and Distressing Shipwreck of the Whale-Ship Essex*, by Owen Chase. There's also a book by [legendary comparative mythologist] Joseph Campbell called *The Mythic Image*, and I'm all over it whenever I do Mastodon stuff—it links the symbolism of all the world's cultures."

Romano combined his inspirations in a 52-by-52-inch oil painting that deifies Melville's white whale, Hindu-style. "That crown of cobras on the whale's head is called *Ananta*," he says. "When you see images of Vishnu [the Supreme Being in Hinduism], you'll see the crown of cobras behind him that represents the endless and the eternal. Vishnu is essentially the creator: He dreams us, and we dream him. Going back to ideas in *Moby-Dick* and the book's references to God, I made the whale a god."

Many of the painting's more elaborate elements, like the Japanese *Hokusai* wave, harpoon-wielding Indonesian puppets, and the mystical Pharos (or Lighthouse) of Alexandria—one of the original Seven Wonders of the World—aren't visible on the CD cover but appear in the booklet and in the gatefold LP version of *Leviathan*—not to mention on the slew of import and limited CD iterations that have appeared since the album's initial release. (See them at workhardened.com/mastodon/lev.html.)

"I used to be a big-time record collector, and finding all the different versions of a certain album used to drive me nuts," Romano laughs. "Now I'm contributing to the problem." **J. BENNETT**

IS THERE AN ALBUM COVER WHOSE STORY YOU WANT US TO TELL? WRITE US AT LETTERS@REVOLVERMAG.COM.

SKETCHES COURTESY OF PAUL ROMANO

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